

HISTORY
OF
THE POTTSVILLE SCHOOL
DISTRICT

C. Boyer Jr.

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OF
THE POTTSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT
1834-1966

By
Herrwood E. Hobbs

Authorized by the Board of Education
on November 11, 1964

FOREWORD

The 132-year study of the Pottsville School District is a challenging and fascinating study, but it is not an easy one.

To assemble even this modest history, thousands of pages of minute book records, many penned in an almost illegible hand, were scanned. Old newspaper files, history books and high school year books were examined and re-examined. Records of the Department of Public Instruction at Harrisburg were consulted. Conflicting dates and information had to be reconciled. Some personal interviews were undertaken.

But I am satisfied that the following pages, culled and condensed from countless more pages of information and statistics, represent as accurate a history of the Pottsville School District as is possible.

In the preparation of this history, names of individuals were used only when it was felt such use was necessary or vital to the purpose of the study. Obviously, many persons who contributed to the successful operation of the district from 1834 to 1966 must remain unlisted and unsung because of space limitation.

Direct quotations from school district minute books and from newspapers have been used liberally to breathe into the history the atmosphere of the passing years.

It may be felt that, in some instances, undue detail and weight were given to certain phases of the district's history.

It was my judgment that this detail was necessary to emphasize these phases in their proper perspective to the development of this study, and to contribute to a fuller understanding of the atmosphere of the times.

While the Pottsville School District existed until June 30, 1966, certain of the information from 1962, when the first step of school re-organization took place, necessarily concerns the Pottsville Area School System and the Pottsville Area School District.

Grateful acknowledgment is given to the school district personnel providing assistance in the preparation of this study, but particularly to three former colleagues who aided immeasurably, Secretary Howard S. Fernsler, Miss Minna Hutchinson and Miss Eva Auslander; Superintendent Alex Atty and to Miss Dorothy Cody who helped to eliminate errors prone to creep into such a history.

I appreciate the opportunity of making this study of the school district to which I and countless thousands owe a debt for an educational experience provided by dedicated school directors and teachers.

Pottsville, Pa.
May 1966

Herrwood E. Hobbs

SOURCE MATERIAL

The Historical Society of Schuylkill County:

Microfilmed and bound files of the "Miners' Journal,"
"Pottsville Journal" and "Pottsville Republican."

Files of "The Crimson and White," "The P.H.S. Annual"
and "Hi-S-Potts."

Photographs and pamphlet material.

Joseph Henry Zerbey History of Pottsville and Schuylkill County (1933-1935).

History of Schuylkill County, Pa., (W. W. Munsell & Co.-1881).

Souvenir History, Pottsville High School (1953).

Minute books of the Pottsville School District (1834-1966).

Files of the Department of Public Instruction, Harrisburg.

"IN SCHOOL-DAYS"

By

John Greenleaf Whittier
(1807-1892)

Still sits the school-house by the road,
A ragged beggar sunning;
Around it still the sumachs grow,
And blackberry-vines are running.

Within, the master's desk is seen,
Deep scarred by raps official,
The warping floor, the battered seats,
The jack-knive's carved initial.

The charcoal frescoes on its wall;
Its door's worn sill betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
Went storming out to playing!

Long years ago a winter sun
Shone over it at setting;
Lit up its western window-panes,
and low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,
And brown eyes full of grieving,
Of one who still her steps delayed
When all the school was leaving.

For near her stood the little boy
Her childish favor singled;
His cap pulled low upon a face
Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow
To right and left, he lingered;-
As restlessly her tiny hands
The blue-choke apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt
The soft hand's light caressing,
And heard the tremble of her voice,
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word;
I hate to go above you.
Because," the brown eyes lower fell,-
"Because you see, I love you!"

Still memory to a gray-haired man
That ~~ew~~ sweet child-face is showing.
Dear girl! the grasses on her grave
Have forty years been growing!

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,
How few who pass above him
Lament their triumph and his loss
Like her,--because they love him.

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POTTSVILLE IN 1834

Pottsville had an ambitious scattering of wooden and stone homes and taverns, a population of some 2,500 persons, a steadily increasing "port" on the Schuylkill Canal, and at least one struggling private school when her people took action to approve "common schools" in 1834.

The Pottsville Institute and Academy, opened two years earlier, was housed in a brick building at Fifth and West Norwegian Streets, now the site of the Garfield Building.

Its advertisement in the "Miners' Journal" offered English, geography, history, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, natural or moral philosophy, chemistry and geology for a tuition fee of \$6 a quarter. The tuition for modern languages was \$8 a quarter.

Moreover, Thomas Hervey, whose name appeared at the foot of the weekly newspaper's advertisement, was declared to have "excellent" credentials from Amherst and was well qualified to teach the school. At least three citizens who added their names to the advertisement said so.

And, for the ambitious-to-learn, Benjamin Bannan, editor of the "Journal," conducted a circulating library, of a sort.

His newspaper ignored the first election of school directors on September 19, 1834, contenting itself with printing a brief item that "we understand that directors in favor of the school bill were elected in the following school districts, viz., Orwigsburg, Tamaqua, Pottsville and Norwegian Township" (Tamaqua was then a part of Schuylkill Township).

Generally ignoring "common schools" as unnewsworthy, the "Journal" found more to its liking a political item that a Hickory Pole had been "bored down" at Orwigsburg and the newspaper, in true Whig-like fashion, charged that Jackson admirers had committed the outrage.

Rents were high; a two-story building on Centre Street commanded an annual rent of from \$200 to \$300 a year.

But market prices were normal, eggs nine cents a dozen, butter 10 cents a pound, potatoes 40 cents a bushel, lard eight cents a pound, feathers 40 cents a pound, and whiskey 28 cents a gallon.

More than 125 canal boats a week cleared the "Port of Pottsville," taking downstream coal cargoes averaging 45 tons.

There was considerable railroad activity. The Mt. Carbon Railroad extended its rails from Mt. Carbon to Mt. Laffee and predicted a rosy future although the legal speed was limited to not less than three miles an hour nor more than four. Just around the corner were railroads running through the town's main streets--a set of rails from Potts and Bannan colliery on Guinea Hill (Race Street) and intersecting the Market Street Railroad, running down Market Street from Black Mine Colliery, at Second.

The "Journal" was in the ninth year of its 128-year career.

A "monied institution of good character"--the Miners' Bank--was in existence. The Pottsville Water Company, capitalized at \$14,200, was operating. So were the breweries of D. G. Yuengling and Andrew Y. Moore. And because only a few years earlier coal prospectors slept on the floor of the few inns in the town, there were new hotels, George Dengler's White Horse Hotel on the present site of the Necho Allen, the Pennsylvania Hall, the Mortimer House, the Exchange House and others.

There were at least eight churches. But a delegation of ladies complained to the "Journal" that the mud was so thick on the streets they hadn't been able to attend church for several months and plank sidewalks ought to be built.

Store business was brisk. Merchant Nicholas Fox boasted that his high silk hats of "superior" quality were to be sold "very cheap" and watchmaker M. K. Coatsworth offered for sale powders to purify the blood at the relatively stiff prices of \$1, \$2 and \$3 a packet.

The coal output of the Schuylkill Region that year was satisfying--
226,000 tons.

Hopes for good times were high but there were 1,000 men out of work in this area alone in spite of the prosperity cry raised by Edward Burd Hubley during his successful candidacy for Congress from Schuylkill and Lehigh Counties as a Jackson Democrat.

Still, coal was dug under the very streets of Pottsville. Within a year Samuel Lewis was to open a tunnel from the foot of Greenwood Hill to the corner of Fifth and Norwegian Streets, under the very building where now sits the Board of Education.

This, then, was the community of Pottsville which had advanced into the experiment of a "common school" education.

THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS

There were, to be sure, private schools in Pottsville before the entrance of the "common school" concept.

Early histories agree that the first was a private "German" school in the old Repp Church on Mill Creek Avenue, a short distance northeast of Agricultural Park.

This log church, built in 1811, was the meeting place of worship for persons of Pottsville, Minersville, Brown's Farm, Bull's Head and Flowery Field, and it followed as a custom that the Repp Church, also known as the "Dutch Church," should be used as a school building.

All lessons were taught in the German language and little is known of the teacher except that he was an old soldier who had served in the German cavalry and was a strict disciplinarian--"fencing with the ferule" he called it.

The next school was in a log house on the "island" opposite Mauch Chunk Street on the present site of the Phillips-Van Heusen Corporation "island" plant. John Hoff, an aging Irishman of about 70 and a long-time clerk for Pottsville founder John Pott, was the teacher. Hoff also wound up as the first teacher in the log school house where the Centre Street School now stands.

Founder Pott, in creating the town which bears his name, was generous and far-seeing. In his original town plot, he set apart a square of ground on Centre Street, extending from High (now Race) Street to Laurel Street in width, and to Second Street, for a triple purpose.

There would be a school for the children. A cemetery, but only for residents of the town. And this first public building, a "rude" wooden structure, was to be used as a meeting place on the Sabbath.

Pott and his wife, Maria, were buried in his cemetery, their remains to be undisturbed until 1895 when the school district exhumed all the bodies and re-buried them as a part of a project to create a playground for children of the Centre Street School.

To this Centre Street log school came teachers, apparently on a semi-voluntary basis at least, to conduct classes--John Randolph, John Gray, John Downing, Joseph S. Silver, Charles Loeser and John Porter--from 1819 to 1826.

These men are today just names on early Pottsville's educational scene but they were, in effect, the leaders of the first organized efforts to teach an organized school.

Silas Hough, described as a good teacher and a severe disciplinarian, came on to teach in the old log school house in 1827 and continued as a private school teacher for 30 years.

For several years, Hough, John Sanderson and John Porter were the principal teachers of the borough.

Sanderson conducted a private school for several years prior to 1840.

Porter taught a private school until 1836, then became one of the borough's first public school teachers. He was still in business in 1838, offering English and mathematical school instruction at his house at Fourth Street and Schuylkill Avenue while Mrs. Porter instructed the female department in plain and ornamental needle work. "Terms" were from \$2.50 to \$3.50 a quarter of 12 weeks.

Most influential and pretentious of the town's private schools was the Pottsville Institute and Academy which opened in the Old Arcade Building on Centre Street on September 24, 1832, with A. A. Wood as principal. The next year it moved into a brick building at Fifth and Norwegian Streets, now the site of the Garfield Building. In 1847, then known as the Pottsville Academy, it was conducted at the Quaker Meeting House at 10th and Howard Avenue.

At this time the Academy had about 40 pupils, "sons of the most influential and intellectual citizens of the town."

Its courses included English, French, Latin, Hebrew and higher mathematics. Besides the primary department, there were two years of four terms each and tuition ranged from \$4.50 to \$6 a quarter.

In 1847, the school was so large that three assistant teachers were needed and in 1848 a building was erected for \$5,000.

A charter in the name of the Pottsville Academy was granted at the instance of prominent Pottsvillians interested in education--John Shippen, Francis W. Hughes, Benjamin Pott, George Patterson, Samuel Sillyman and others. The building which was later the property of Henry Russel at Ninth and Howard Avenue is now owned by St. John the Baptist Church as a recreational center.

The Pottsville Academy boasted a number of accomplished teachers including Elias Schneider, who afterwards became first superintendent of Pottsville public schools, and Daniel Kirkwood, who became famous for his scientific research and was later professor of mathematics at the State University of Indiana.

The Academy closed in 1855, a victim of the inroads of the public high school which took most of its pupils. It was just two years after the first classes began in Pottsville High School.

There were at least a score of private schools operating in Pottsville between the 1830's and the first quarter of the 20th century.

Most of these schools operated from the private homes of their founders or in church basements. Some lasted only a few years; others flourished for as long as half a century.

One of the better ones, the Paschal Institute, was opened by a Quaker, J. A. M. Passmore, on Hotel Street. A preparatory school for Lafayette College, it was later used as a public school building and abandoned in 1893.

Many of the private schools specialized in education for young ladies and took on such names as the Pottsville Female Seminary or the Young Ladies Seminary.

And some are still remembered by the community's older set--the Hill Private School, Mrs. Thurlow's School and Miss Minnie Carpenter's School, the last expiring about 1925.

THE BEGINNING

"The principal subject of instruction shall be a plain English education."

On these brave words, the purpose of public school education in Pottsville was set forth by its school board.

The date was May 22, 1836.

That was a Monday, the board's minutes said. But they also said a few days earlier that "Fryday" was the 20th.

And the reliable weekly "Miners' Journal" had said on May 21 that "the public schools will open on Monday next." In its 28th issue, the "Journal" said that the "common schools, five in number, opened in this borough on Tuesday last."

It was all very confusing, but of importance was the fact that, Monday or Tuesday, school bells had rung, the first classes were held and "upwards of 290 children have applied for admission (and) so far the system works well--and is growing in favor with the citizens," observed the "Journal."

It had been nearly two years since the election of the first school directors, authorized by an act of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania passed April 1, 1834.

The local election on September 19, 1834, at George Strouse's inn where subsequently the school board was to hold many of its meetings, named six directors to establish a general system of "Education by Common Schools."

Easily the most prominent member of the first board was distinguished F. B. Nichols, who had been the borough's first burgess, the first president of the Miners' Bank and who carried in his chest a bullet received in the famous 1813 battle between the frigates "Chesapeake" (commanded by James "Don't-Give-Up-The-Ship" Lawrence) and the "Shannon."

Another member, Enos Chichester, was a physician. The other four, Benjamin Spayd, Joseph George, Joseph Lyon and Joseph Thomas, appeared to be ordinary townsmen.

Until passage of the 1834 act, education had been a casual, hit-or-miss proposition in Schuylkill County.

What formal education children received was generally in churches, usually German, where ministers who had preached the gospel on Sunday taught reading, writing, arithmetic and sacred music on weekdays.

There was a scattering of private schools, of course, but the county's principal institutions of learning were the Orwigsburg Academy, incorporated in 1813 on a scale so modest that it was stipulated the yearly value of its property might not exceed \$2,000, and the Pottsville Institute and Academy, opened in September, 1832.

The opposition of German-speaking people blocked common school education in some parts of the county for many years. In a northern Schuylkill County township, adoption of the free school system was fought successfully until 1858 when the court appointed six directors. These six retreated in unison the next year and new directors were appointed. The latter levied a school tax, only to find the tax collector became the target of levelled guns, pitchforks, clubs, iron poker and scalding water.

Indeed, at a meeting of county commissioners and delegates from districts in the county after passage of the 1834 Act, only four districts accepted the new law, so strong were the prejudices of the German population, then constituting 80 percent of the county's inhabitants.

These four districts were Pottsville, Orwigsburg, Norwegian and Schuylkill Townships but the last named refused to elect directors favorable to enforcement of the law.

"Politicians," a historian acidly commented, "were, of course, found to espouse the cause of ignorance as long as it remained popular."

In fact five years later, 193 districts in the state refused to accept the common school system and of the 840 accepting districts, 212 didn't bother to make a report to State Superintendent of Common Schools Francis R. Shunk as required by law.

But Pottsville was prompt to lay the foundation of its free public school system.

An even week after the election of directors, the board organized and elected Thomas, president, and Lyon, secretary. Samuel Sillyman was borough treasurer and as such was designated school board treasurer.

Nichols, however, had no taste for his new duties.

He resigned at the first meeting and Strange N. Palmer, Esq., was elected to the vacancy. He was on hand to take his seat upon acceptance of Nichols' resignation. (Palmer didn't last either; he resigned April 25, 1835.)

At this maiden meeting, Lyon was elected the board's delegate in compliance with the law. It was agreed Lyon and Palmer were to serve until the first regular election, Thomas and Spayd until the second, and George and Chichester until the third.

As its only other act of business, the board directed Secretary Lyon to provide books and stationery for the board's use as well as a "case" for the safe keeping of the books, documents and papers which were to be accumulated.

There was no quorum for the October 17 meeting but on October 28 Delegate Lyon was instructed to attend the first meeting of the county commission and vote for the imposition of a tax to meet expenses of the several school districts.

At the time, Pottsville had about 500 taxable residents and the board's census showed 473 children between four and ten years of age, 261 between 10 and 15, and 93 between 15 and 20, an overall total of 827.

The board made its first report to the people at a community meeting November 22, 1834.

Delegate Lyon told Andrew Russel, the meeting chairman, and his fellow townsmen that all four districts had voted affirmatively to make appropriations for common school purposes and an overall appropriation of \$800 granted by the Act was to be divided as follows: Pottsville and Norwegian Township, each \$300; Orwigsburg, \$108, and Schuylkill Township, \$92.

The town folk unanimously agreed to raise a tax for general education; indeed Chairman Russel said "the commencement of a new system of general education is an affair that requires great reflection, much examination, by our experience and judgment."

Of the 827 children, it was estimated 600 would attend school.

The cost per pupil annually would be \$4--so that would be \$2,400.

The State and County Treasury each agreed to give \$300; there would be another \$150 from a tax under the old law.

Thus, the district needed about \$1,650 more for the first year. And the \$4 estimate for one scholar's education for a year was more than generous, the citizens agreed. Afterall, in Connecticut it cost \$2.80 a year; in New York, only \$2.28.

There was a bit of hedging at the cost, and some discussion among the prospective taxpayers, but the board's report was accepted "by a great majority."

There were more board meetings to work out school detail, principally in board members' homes, in Lawyer Palmer's office, and in Strouse's tavern. Tiring of switching about, directors finally agreed to pay a citizen 50 cents a night for the use of his home.

There were the matters of school rooms and the teachers' salaries. This last was speedily settled: \$500 annually for the principal, \$325 for his first assistant, \$300 for the second assistant, \$250 for the first female school teacher, and \$200 for her assistant.

The board acquired pamphlets on education, some slates, and some offers to buy school equipment. John Phillips, whose private school had folded, sold a table and several desks to the school district for \$5.

Directors negotiated with prospective teachers, finally agreeing to hire A. W. Middlemiss as first principal for \$700 a year and his wife as a teacher for \$400, somewhat higher than the scale of wages originally agreed upon. Within a month, the Middlemiss couple had quit its job before the schools got under way and the board paid the \$91.66 $\frac{2}{3}$ due them.

It is significant that many of the early applicants for teaching jobs were husband-wife teams who had been conducting private schools.

The board was busy examining prospective teachers and all sorts of places for suitable school rooms. The pace was too much for Director Chichester who found it interfered with his medical duties so he resigned.

But on May 18, 1836, all was in readiness.

Set up were two male and three female schools, five rooms with an annual rental of \$235 which "will accommodate 450 to 500 pupils with sufficient desks and benches."

Teachers' salaries were pegged, overall, at \$1,320 a year.

And in spite of all the initial expenses, the board concluded, it had a balance of \$4,089.68 "which amount the directors think will be adequate to their wants the present year without burthening the citizens with any additional."

Five school rooms were designated, school number one on the second story of the Friends Meeting House on Sharp Mountain and school number two on the lower story; school number three at Centre and Mahantongo Streets; school number four, the Log House, the school providentially provided by Pottsville Founder John Pott on North Centre Street, and school number 5 at Storer's House, further identification lacking.

Of no less importance were the rules and regulations adopted May 22, 1836.

Condensed, they provided for admission of scholars of both sexes between five and 18 years of age upon examination by the school director to whom application was made, and a ban on entering school for the purpose of learning one particular branch--"all must take the same course in all departments."

School hours were from $8\frac{1}{2}$ in the morning until noon, from two to five p.m., April 1 to October 1, and from nine a.m. until noon, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ p.m., October 1 to April 1.

A vacation of three weeks was allowed in April. No sessions were to be held Saturday afternoon and "additionally, New Year's Day, Good Fryday until the following Tuesday, July 4, Christmas Day and such other days as directors may allow."

Parents were warned not to interfere with the "government" of the schools, nor to detain children at home without sufficient excuse "but shall be particular in remanding them at the stated hours with clean face and hands and in other respects tidy, hair combed, clothes cleaned (and if necessary mended) and as decently apparelled as circumstances will permit."

Such failure, or sending to school a pupil having an infection without a certificate from the "sanitary" physician, was sufficient for denial of a seat in class.

There were seven sections to the rules on discipline, highlighted by this significant paragraph:

"The religious opinions of the pupils shall be held sacred and no attempt to inculcate sectarian views or opinions will be allowed."

Teachers were prohibited, of course, from receiving presents or additional remuneration from parents or guardians.

And punishment of pupils was condoned but, surprisingly enough, only by a 3-2 vote which defeated Director Joseph George's resolution "that it be particularly enjoined on teachers that corporal punishment cannot be allowed in any case."

Everything was ready for the ringing of the first school bell on Monday--or was it Tuesday?

THE EARLY YEARS

Although the school boards of the first two decades of common school existence had only a few buildings, little money and few contacts with state school authority, it is not to be supposed they had a dearth of problems.

After the initial struggle of getting the schools into operation in May, 1836, there was a singular letdown in school board activity. Directors failed to muster a quorum for five consecutive meetings for reasons obscure today. After they finally met July 15, they went another three meetings without a quorum.

With a near-empty treasury, the boards were frugal in expenditures, carefully weighing the pennies spent for such essentials as slates, benches, tin dippers, drinking cups, and "rain-proof" roofs.

At times it became necessary to challenge the legitimacy of even the smallest of bills. An apparent 50-cent overcharge by the "Pottsville Standard" for printing was quickly rebuffed and directors refused to pay the bill until an adjustment was made.

No pupil was admitted to enrollment in the schools until a director had signed his admission card, and this was a time-consuming task.

Not the least of the vexing situations which confronted directors at almost every meeting were those of pupil discipline and suspension. The board ruled on each individual case of suspension, and these cases were multitudinous and annoying.

The minute books through the years, in fact, cite a rash of rebellious and unruly students.

Suspensions were voted for "violent resistance of the superintendent and their teacher," for whistling, impudence and disobedience, for conduct "generally," for irregular attendance, for breaking a fellow pupil's slate (fine 50¢), breaking panes of glass (10¢ each), and even stabbing a fellow pupil with a knife.

Teachers understandably took a dim view of such conduct and applied paddle, cane and whip to the refractory pupils.

There is no doubt that application of the ruler and hickory stick to pupils' backsides was overdone.

Directors disapproved use of a cowhide on a boy by a temporary teacher; in another case of thrashing, the teacher was "in a passion and perhaps did whip the boy severely." It was an all-too-frequent practice to tie the hands of small scholars behind their backs and require them to stand on a bench during the entire school session.

But many charges of "ill usage" of pupils were dismissed on the grounds that "no chastisement of any importance nor of a serious nature had been inflicted."

(The problem of school discipline is an eternal one but it is likely that Director P. W. Sheafer, chairman of a "committee on suspensions, dismissals and punishments in our borough schools," delivered the most searching appraisal of corporal punishment in a report June 30, 1870.

("If we estimate the character of good teachers aright, it is first to be qualified to teach and lead the children gently along into higher degrees of learning, setting a good example mentally and morally, above all be patient, industrious, avoiding all displays of temper and in every way to rule gently, but firmly, and by all means prevent dissensions, dismissals, truancy and punishments.

("We know it is asking too much to expect all the graces that adorn human character for \$30 or \$40 a month but we owe a Christian duty to those placed under our charges, who are not paragons of perfections. We especially ask that the parents will do their part and not leave the training of their children in the hands of teachers and school directors. We recommend the entire abolishment of the ruler as a mode of punishment but we do not wish to spare the rod when its use is deemed best.")

(Director Sheafer optimistically felt that music hath charms to sooth rebellious pupils. His report concluded: "We hope soon to have vocal music introduced in all the schools as it so much mollifies and calms the sometimes turbulent spirit of Young America.")

The conduct of some teachers came in for criticism at frequent board meetings.

In 1840, two teachers were criticized for "not attending at the hours appointed by the rules and discipline of the schools," for making use of "barbarous and unjustifiable punishment towards their pupils" and for "a great irregularity in their attendance at established school hours."

Not only this, the board grumbled, but the teachers took their sewing to school "to the detriment of the public by employing other scholars to do their duties in place of attending to it personally."

In fact, as late as 1897, the board's rules and regulations warned that teachers were "forbidden to take with them to the school rooms any kind of work, knitting, sewing and the like."

One teacher was habitually absent from school in the early 40's and a surprise visit from the board found her mother teaching in her place. "No reason was assigned for her absence than the weather was wet and rainy and she might have wet her feet," the minutes commented acidly.

The board finally tired of this continuous absence and finally demanded her resignation. When the teacher finally resigned or was discharged (it is not clear which), the board promptly elected her sister to the job.

And there was the Sharp Mountain School House janitor who was paid \$25 a month plus his rent and coal but who was hanging around rum shops instead of cleaning the building.

Faced with discharge, the janitor complained he had planted his garden for the summer and would lose his vegetables if the board ousted him. He was fired, anyway, but the board compromised by calculating the value of the vegetables and making allowance for it in the dismissal notice.

The buildings were generally old, leaking and unsanitary.

In 1853, horrified directors found to their amazement that the privy at the female school on High (now Race) street stood partly on the public street and they were forced to tear it down.

Ten year later, the board's building committee reported that conditions at the old Fishbach building were typical of the district--the roof leaked, the plaster had fallen down and the privy was "open and filthy."

Schools were frequently closed down because of lack of coal. Classes were dismissed until coal could be delivered, and in some cases the Visiting Committee was surprised to discover school rooms vacant of teacher and pupils because there was no heat or coal and everybody had gone home without notice.

Yet there is evidence that by 1876 the buildings had been improved to the extent that the board took increased pride in the district's physical structure and voted \$28 for photographs of several buildings for exhibition at the State School Building at Philadelphia's Centennial Exposition, plus \$50 to help erect that building.

Frugality was practiced from the beginning. The most modest needs--a fire poker, a tin dipper, a broom, coat hooks--were scanned by directors who passed judgment on each individual purchase.

Sometimes it appeared directors carried economy too far.

School districts of comparable size were using and finding the telephone a valuable instrument but as late as 1902 local directors, by a 19-1 vote, rejected the offer of the United Telephone and Telegraph Company to install a telephone in each school and the superintendent's home at an annual rate of \$15 each.

The fact that there were 500 United installations in Pottsville, and 1,300 in the county, which could be reached without extra charge failed to influence a favorable vote for Mr. Bell's invention.

This was 22 years after the first telephone installation was made in Pottsville and there is no official record of service in the schools by any telephone company for some years thereafter.

But boards were very busy--there is no doubt of this--"examining" applicants for teaching jobs, visiting the schools, levying taxes and engaging in general administration of the schools.

The early directors managed quite well to ward off attacks on the public school system by voters, especially in the election of 1845 when Pottsville had "veto" power over the schools.

Voters reacted strongly to the issue on whether schools should be continued in the borough, or suspended for a year.

The vote for continuance was 442; against, 78.

The "Miners' Journal" thought it knew the reason for even 78 dissenting votes although it conceded "nobody now but regards the proper education of children as an object of paramount importance."

But the few dissenting votes were cast by some, said the newspaper, "not because they objected to the school system but because they believed there was mismanagement in the schools, and that some of the teachers were incompetent to discharge the responsible duties devolved upon them."

The schools did seem a bit overcrowded.

There were only five teachers for the 402 female pupils and one teacher had 145 pupils "crowded in a room not large enough to accommodate more than 70 and consequently a portion of the pupils must stand."

Directors should divide the schools, "procure more commodious apartments and increase the number of teachers, or do something to correct the evil. They must rent or build, "declared the "Journal."

But nobody could deny that the directors were hard-working or zealous.

They prodded tax collectors into performing their work more diligently.

In 1889, they noted that for some reason magistrates weren't remitting fines of \$2 imposed on persons intoxicated on highways, in public houses or in public places, and the district needed the money.

Smarting under this loss of revenue, school directors made personal visits to the magistrates to find out just how much money was being collected under this Act of 1856. And why fines for illegal car (railroad) riding weren't being turned into the district.

Their visits yielded no money and little light on the subject; 'squires said few if any arrests were made for these offenses and there was no money to remit.

There was, however, one tangible benefit to directors--the annual supper. For some years, they met at the Northwestern Hotel at Centre and Arch Streets and paid hotelman Daniel Hill some \$30 for meals, etc., for the half dozen members of the board, duly paying the bill from school district funds.

And, happily for the directors, there appears for many years no record that "indignant" taxpayers attended even a single meeting of their school board.

THE COLORED SCHOOL

The question of segregated schools would appear, at first blush, to be foreign to the Pottsville school system but it is factual that for 34 years--from 1843 to 1877--the district maintained a school on Minersville Street for colored children.

The reason for establishment of a colored school seems obscure but the board's minutes, without further comment, state on February 8, 1843: "And the following resolution was passed--Resolved, that no coloured children shall be admitted into or continued in any of the public schools now and under the direction of the board."

Prompt steps were taken, however, to establish a school for colored children.

On May 10, 1843, the committee appointed to "organise" the school reported that "they have performed that duty and have organised said school which is now opened under the tuition of J. L. Surls at a salary of twelve dollars and fifty cents a month. The number of pupils in attendance is thirty one."

The \$12.50-a-month salary, it may be mentioned, was somewhat less than the district's going rate for teachers' pay which ranged from \$200 to \$225 a year.

The colored school often seemed to have experienced varying degrees of success and failure.

Unless more pupils attended, the board warned in 1853, the school would be discontinued.

Promptly the minute book recorded, "the people of color" petitioned for continuance of the school but directors declined.

Subsequently, with the opening of the fall term that year, "the difficulty among colored people had been arranged and the school was ordered resumed."

By this time, the teacher, Samuel Gulden, was making \$25 a month.

Then it appeared, the board acted to continue the school only on application of the colored population.

Each September for years, the board would be petitioned to open the school and agreed "if the rent of the school room at the African Church is the same as last year."

For reasons lost to history, the colored children had half the educational chances as their white playmates. The white classrooms were open 10 months a year; the colored school was open only five months.

Finally attendance dwindled to the point that on January 16, 1878, a "reform" school board voted to discontinue the school.

It had only three pupils, the teacher's salary had moved up to \$45 a month and, anyhow, the board had promised an economy administration which included efforts to cut High School Principal John E. Shull's salary from \$120 to \$115 a month and make 20 percent cuts in the secretary's annual salary of \$200 and the treasurer's \$100-a-year pay.

It was doubtlessly reassuring to the board, too, that its Visiting Committee had reported that "we found a good attendance of colored children in the schools. They are getting along very nicely and there seems to be no prejudice against them on the part of their teachers or the other children."

The experiment in segregation had ended.

THE SCHOOL AT ST. PATRICK'S

A petition before the board on December 21, 1842, put members squarely in the position of determining whether or not religious instruction should be given in a school under the district's control.

The petition was a communication from parents and guardians of pupils taught in the "basement storie of the Catholic Church," asking the board to take control of the school and pay a pro rata amount for the number of scholars taught there.

The special committee assigned disposition of the petition "of the friends of St. Patrick's School" offered a compromise view of the situation.

The committee noted that "the common school system of Pennsylvania is established upon the broad grounds of equal rights, and general education, for the high and the low, the rich and the poor, and is therefore to be governed by such principles as will, during its continuance, place our citizens on an equal footing in the privileges and blessings conferred on us by the school system."

The proposals of the petitioners--that St. Patrick's School be received into the district's charge, retention of "their" school books, continuance of the present teacher, Peter F. Mudy, and payment of a pro rate proportion of school funds for tuition of the pupils in the school--met with the disfavor of the committee although the petitioners offered to furnish the school room and provide fixtures without any expense to the district.

However, in a spirit of compromise, the committee suggested establishment of an additional male school with a competent teacher but "in accordance with the views above expounded, all books teaching peculiar views of Theology should be excluded from the Public Schools. And that the school above proposed should be based upon the same principles, rights and privileges, and governed by the same rules and regulations as those already under the control of the Directors of this District."

The committee also held that the school rooms and all property necessary for the conduct of the school should be held by the district by purchase or lease.

So the board, echoing the sentiment of its committee, rented the "basement storie of the Catholic Church" for six months with an option and hired Peter Mudy (who had been a member and secretary of the board two years before) as teacher.

But it stipulated "that no religious instruction shall be taught in said school or to members of said school during the usual school hours."

Mr. Mudy was paid \$350 a year and within a month had 137 pupils on the rolls of his school.

There is, however, every indication that Pottsville's early school boards pursued an elastic policy in granting use of school rooms for religious instruction by recognized church groups during non-school hours.

Indeed, it appeared that whether such authorization was granted depended on the importance of the person making the request.

In 1876, a Professor Dill asked use of a room in the Jalappa building for Sunday school purposes. In 1877, Attorney Fergus G. Farquhar asked permission to use a room in the Fishbach building for the same purpose. In both cases, the board promptly referred the requests to the building committee with "power to act." There is no further reference to the requests in the minute books and it may be assumed they were granted.

Rev. Ferris, presenting a petition of North Ward residents for use of the Fishbach building for a mission school and religious services in 1881, was given authorization when the board could find no resolution prohibiting the practice.

Not so fortunate was Larus Pratt who, in 1877, asked use of a school room to preach the doctrine of the Latter Day Saints. Pratt explained he had "neither purse nor script" and couldn't hire a hall.

The board was prompt to deny this request.

Its reason: "The children would have to take their books home or risk having them mutilated because there were always more or less rowdies attending church."

THE SCHOOL HOUSE AND THE GRAVEYARD

For 101 years the squat, stone "Female Grammar School" has occupied a short city block on Centre Street between Race and Laurel Streets.

It is, of course, no longer a "Female Grammar School" but an elementary school for both boys and girls.

For 30 years, an old, decaying cemetery stood behind the present building and it is only because boys and girls attended the school and used common toilet facilities as late as 1895 that Pottsville rid itself of a central city health and eye sore.

This is, of course, the site which founder John Pott dedicated to the use of his town, partly for burial, partly for school purposes and for a church "free to all denominations of Christians according to the will of the majority of the inhabitants."

The cemetery had become such a nuisance that the school board had debated more than once its chances of removing the bodies to another place of burial and making it a place useful for school purposes.

It was not an easy proposition and Board Secretary W. F. Scheerer, also chairman of the Building Committee, found it necessary to unroll the history of the plot at the board meeting March 13, 1895.

When Pott dedicated the lot, 125 x 230 feet, for town purposes, there were only six or seven families in Pottsville and because the dedication was not in writing, no one could say exactly which part of the ground was intended for burial and which for school purposes, Mr. Scheerer pointed out.

By successive pieces of legislation, the State Assembly finally vested control of the log house and its successor first stone building, and the burial ground, with the school district.

First, in 1839, it gave control to the Borough of Pottsville, requiring appointment of trustees to take charge of the school and burial ground and make rules and regulations for interment. The Borough was required to maintain both the school and cemetery by levying taxes on inhabitants and real estate.

In 1834, when the common school act was passed, the school board stepped in. In 1841, it gained permission of the trustees of the old burial ground to build a school house adjoining the old log house and watch house. A stone school house, predecessor to the "Female Grammar School," was erected.

But the trustees wearied of the proper discharge of their duties and in 1856 the legislature passed a supplement to the act of 1839, vesting the duties of these trustees in the school district. Title still remained in the corporation of the Borough of Pottsville.

A further supplement in 1859, pointing out the original school houses erected on the lot were inadequate for school purposes, vested title in the school district and authorized removal of the building, and the erection of a new one.

Still a further supplement provided that if the rights of any inhabitants of the original town plot were injured, they were entitled to compensation at the school district's expense.

The board had decided to erect a new building for the "concentration" of female students when constitutionality of the legislation was challenged in a suit brought by Benjamin Pott, a son of the founder, who won a restraining order from the county court preventing the school district from tearing down the old building and erecting a new one.

On appeal, the acts of 1856 and 1859 were held legal by the State Supreme Court which ruled that the proposed erection of the building would be no encroachment on the rights of burial, but recognizing such right of burial and directing the school district to properly define the cemetery's boundaries.

In due time--on September 25, 1865--the "Female Grammar School" was opened and 30 years later, Secretary Scheerer noted, it had 10 rooms and between 400 and 500 pupils who "were confined within the walls of the school all day excepting a few who during recess may go within the narrow yards on each side."

There ~~was~~ no playground as such and the ~~half~~-acre cemetery in back of the school was "used for no purpose but a habitation of snakes and other vermin, all this in the centre of a town of over 15,000 inhabitants."

There was no record of interments--in fact there had been no burials for 30 years--and the graves were sunken down, tombstones had fallen, water cascading down from Laurel Street towards Race Street was washing away graves and exposing skeletons, and it was "a disgrace to the town."

The canny Scheerer, thus having outlined a sad state of affairs, had an idea.

In 1891, the legislature had enacted a law regulating sanitary conditions of schools and requiring a sufficient number of water closets "in such a manner as to accommodate both sexes separately."

The Pottsville School Board was not complying with the Act. It had no room for separate toilets--except the room in the unkempt, abandoned cemetery.

But in 1893, the Assembly had passed an Act requiring the taking over and occupancy of certain public burial places and under certain circumstances for the purposes of common school education.

Now, mused Scheerer, if the legislature could be persuaded to construe the words "for the purposes of common school education" to mean the enlargement of playgrounds, improvement of sanitary conditions, and providing for the comfort of teachers and pupils to be as essential to education as the building of school houses or the purchase of books and supplies.....

Then, the problem of "accommodating both sexes separately" in water closets would be solved, and a playground would be provided as well.

"It might also be claimed that it is not likely to have been the intention of the donor to disfigure his town forever, by maintaining a nuisance and an eyesore in the very centre thereof, such as this burial lot is, and has been for a long time," Scheerer concluded.

A special committee of the Board hastened to Harrisburg to encourage an amendment to the Act of 1893, and on its passage the way was clear for the abandonment of the cemetery.

Within six months--on October 9, 1895--the board had bought lots 9 x 20 feet at \$7 each, including perpetual care, in the Presbyterian Cemetery and hired William McAdams to provide teams and labor at cost plus 10 percent to remove the remains.

And within another two weeks, 147 "known" dead and 270 "unknown" had been removed and re-interred, most in the Presbyterian Cemetery but some in lots designated by their friends and relatives.

As a respectful gesture, the Board ordered all surplus earth excavated from the Centre Street burial ground to be deposited in Charles Baber Cemetery, "a source of satisfaction to friends of those who were buried in the old plot."

It was also a source of satisfaction to founder Pott's grandson, John L., who said he agreed with the board's action on condition the remains of his grandparents be not disturbed.

The remains of founder John Pott and his wife, Maria, were removed to Charles Baber Cemetery where they rest under tombstones with scarcely legible inscriptions on the west side of the main entrance just short of the chapel.

After all his work, Secretary Scheerer found his labors not entirely pleasing to everyone.

He reported to the Board that he had been labelled with "degrading epithets" by someone calling himself "Septimus Thomas of Scranton" in a letter to the "Daily Republican."

This was too much, he said, and he asked to be relieved of further duty on the cemetery board.

His fellow directors promptly gave him a vote of confidence and declared the work had been done in strict accord with the Board's instructions.

And, in happy climax, the Board voted to add a wing 25 x 35 feet to the building for new toilets so that sanitary segregation could be accomplished as the lawmakers intended.

BEGINNING OF THE HIGH SCHOOL

The school board's advertisement in the Miners' Journal in February, 1851, had in mind, primarily, someone to supervise its growing school system and, secondarily, something like a high school.

The advertisement said simply the board wanted "some well qualified male teacher to take general supervision of the schools, both male and female, whose duty it should be to direct the teachers, classify the schools and have charge of the discipline thereof."

The Bunker Hill building was about to open and the board's committee on re-organization of the schools found on February 13 "the interest of our fellow citizens are awakened on the subject and look to the board with much anxiety on the opening of our new building for their views as to the proper organization of the same."

At the time, the average attendance in the male schools was 390; in the female schools, 360. A teacher, the committee felt, couldn't do justice to more than 50 scholars so it recommended election of one male principal, one male assistant and five female teachers for the new building.

But general supervision, it felt, was necessary for the "more permanent organization of the schools, in view of their future usefulness."

It seemed some people still looked askance on public schools. Strict discipline was lacking and many children were less than "clean and orderly in their person."

"The future usefulness of the public schools demanded a rigid adherence to this rule as it must be known that much of the objection on the part of many of our citizens arise from the fact that many of the children are permitted to attend without due regard to this indispensable observance," the committee's report said.

And, then, the Sharp Mountain or Bunker Hill building was close to the rival Pottsville Academy at Ninth and Howard Avenue and this suggested a conflict among pupils.

So much that the committee said "it is to be apprehended that disorder might arise between the boys and result in mischief to persons or buildings... (and) teachers should be required to have a watchful care of them, and be instructed to expel any from the schools immediately that may be found guilty of bad conduct towards any of the pupils attending the Academy and that it be recommended to have a notice carrying out the intention of the above put up in some conspicuous place in the building."

The Academy was, in a very real sense, the Pottsville High School before this time.

It conducted classes in French, German, English, history and elocution.

Its small, male faculty was reasonably distinguished.

But faculty member Elias Schneider was disgruntled, principally because he had difficulty collecting his salary.

He said so in his application for superintendent of schools.

"The great inconvenience and immense amount of care arising from collecting my money after it has been earned, and with the risk of losing a great portion of it, have induced me to leave my present position. The Trustees of the Academy do not seem to be willing to take the management of the pecuniary affairs into their own hands, and to insure me a stated salary after your high school shall have gone into operation. They cannot, therefore, under existing circumstances expect me to remain."

The school board had not mentioned a high school, as such, in their plans, but it was all too real to Elias Schneider.

He put his views of the establishment of a high school in his letter of application and his views were enlightening and advanced.

"Such an institution," he wrote, "will bring within the reach of all classes the means of obtaining a thorough education. The poor, among whom there are often the most promising youths, will thus have it in their power to make themselves useful to their country, and to bring into play those powers of mind, which otherwise might be buried in oblivion.

"It will also have a powerful influence on all the other teachers of your schools. Each teacher will feel it a point of honor to have as many pupils as possible, advancing rapidly towards becoming students of the high school...

"The stimulating influence of such an Institution will also be very great on the scholars themselves. Each boy will feel as ambitious to advance in his studies as to obtain a seat in the High School, as his teacher will to push him on..."

The board apparently was swayed by Elias Schneider's letter.

By resolution, March 6, 1851, it decided to pay the superintendent \$600 annually "and as soon as we open a new high school, his salary is to be increased to \$800, and also that his whole time be devoted to the schools."

Schneider was elected March 27 over three fellow applicants, Episcopal minister A. Prior, Christopher Little, a fellow Academy teacher and later a lawyer, and C. E. Richardson, of Mauch Chunk.

It would appear that the date of the establishment of the high school as such was about March or April, 1853, based on the board's action to pay \$700 a year from April 1. Deferred, apparently, was the promise to pay \$800.

But Superintendent Schneider's report of March 3, 1853, to the board saw bright prospects, including financial ones, for a high school.

He discussed transferring the most advanced pupils to another room and allowing them 45 minutes for recitation instead of 30.

"This new school would also be more agreeable to the advanced scholars as well to their parents and would, I think, give more influence to our whole system. At present we have a high school in reality but not in name. As we have the thing, let us have the name. A high school proper can be established without any additional expenses than the salary of a female teacher. Mr. Gotchell (principal of male school number 1) and myself can attend to the upper classes, and the male assistant with a female can teach the others."

There was a demand for German classes, he said, and although already "overloaded with labors, I would be most happy to teach a class in this noble language."

But, equally important, such an arrangement would attract pupils from other parts of the county with tuition amounting to \$6 or \$8 a year each. There would be "none but select" pupils in it, and the school already had "fine apparatus" which the Academy hadn't.

Schneider dismissed any thought that the plan was designed to yield him the \$800 expected as a superintendent's salary, concluding that although "my actual and necessary expenses do now actually overrun my salary, I will cheerfully submit whatever your wisdom will dictate."

On this note of sacrifice from a superintendent of vision who needed a salary increase, Pottsville High School began.

Elisha Gotchell became principal as suggested.

There were 1,124 pupils enrolled in Pottsville schools.

Of these, 30 gathered in a room on the second floor of the then new Bunker Hill building and a high school was born.

The Bunker Hill Building was to be the first of six which housed Pottsville High School.

From 1868, after its re-organization from the Civil War low mark which saw its enrollment dwindle to 14 pupils, to 1876 it was in the Academy Building at Fifth and West Norwegian Streets.

It moved in 1876 to the new Jackson Street Building, came back to the Fifth and West Norwegian Street site in 1894 with the opening of the new Garfield Building.

Then, in 1916, the enlarged Patterson Building at 12th and Market Streets was the home for the high school until the 1933 occupancy of the present building at 16th Street and Elk Avenue.

THE HIGH SCHOOL LOANS

In the early 1920's, it became obvious that the Patterson School at 12th Street was inadequate to properly house the high school, and that other buildings, particularly the Bunker Hill school, required repair and attention.

These conditions set into motion three proposals within seven years to float a taxpayer-approved bond issue, principally for the erection of a new high school.

No ~~more~~ controversial issue ever faced Pottsville voters.

That Pottsville needed a new, larger high school was conceded.

Where it should be erected was to be a bitterly contested local issue, fought principally on the front and editorial pages of the two leading daily newspapers, the "Pottsville Republican" and the "Pottsville Journal."

The site proposed by one newspaper was promptly denounced by the other in what many considered a struggle for power and supremacy--to "maintain the balance of power" was the way it was often viewed--which continued for years between the competitive dailies.

The first proposal, to increase the school district's indebtedness by \$500,000 to build a new high school building-athletic field and a new grade school on Sharp Mountain to replace the Bunker Hill building was defeated November 4, 1924, by nearly a two to one vote--3,534 to 1,804. It failed to carry one of the city's 14 voting precincts.

The files of the "Journal" for this year are, unfortunately, non-existent but it would appear from a study of the "Republican" files that it was for the loan--the "Journal" against.

The "Republican" campaign pointed a finger of scorn to "coal corporation heads and other men of means who do not need the high school. They send their boys and girls to preparatory schools and colleges."

Any vote against the school board would be a personal affront to the school directors, six men and one woman, all highly reputable, the "Republican" argued.

Further, it charged, in what must be construed to be more than a mite exaggerated, Pottsville High School pupils were sitting three to a seat and "seven in the front row" without desks.

As for the Bunker Hill building, it said, it was "leaky, sagging, rotting, crumbling, swaying, creaking, smelling, chilly, gaunt, dismal, a dangerous structure for our children's education."

But there is no doubt the bitter argument over the proposed site of the new high school was responsible, in a large measure, for the loan's defeat.

People had all sorts of fanciful ideas about the proposed location although Board President W. W. Martin took care to point out "we have no personal axes to grind or enemies to punish and are solely working for the advancement of Pottsville's schools."

To later day observers who consider a large school plant with an athletic field and an abundance of room vital, the 1924 proposals must be viewed with amusement.

The school should be, some argued, on the site of a property on Norwegian Street between Third and Fourth Streets. Or else enlarge the Garfield or Patterson buildings.

Or the burned out Centennial Hall property whose charred remains had been hidden behind a billboard, midway in the present Capitol Theatre block, for eight years. A capital idea, said some. Stores could be built below it to help bear the expense.

Some large Yorkville plots, at 20th and Norwegian Streets or Dolan's Park at 18th and Market Streets, were unavailable. But maybe the park in the rear of the Centre Street School would be suitable.

And the Penn Land Company property at 12th and Laurel Streets, which was to figure in all three school loan campaigns, was invariably mentioned "but the price would probably be more than the school board could expend."

Even the title of a "lurid" motion picture, "Why Girls Leave Home," at a local theatre was interjected into the campaign. The reason, the "Republican" said, that girls leave home was "because the children don't get the same opportunities to make a success of life here as they should."

But in spite of the school board's promise that the school would be centrally located, not in Yorkville nor in Agricultural Park but between Centre and 12th Streets, "probably nearer Centre Street," the proposal went down to overwhelming defeat.

The second loan campaign in 1927 was a clear-cut battle between the newspapers.

The "Republican" supported the "seven men of honesty" on the school board.

The "Journal" blamed the loan's defeat to the "school board management, the resultant control of a majority of the board, the proposed squandering of money and consequent high taxes."

Vigorously opposing the proposed site on Teaberry Hill, owned by the Penn Land Company, the "Journal" said the site had been extensively worked as a coal mining location.

It ran a page one picture of the Teaberry Hill "sight" with the "no less famous dump in the foreground" and claimed the land cost only \$1,000 an acre three years before. But now the board was being offered the site for \$10,000 an acre, the newspaper charged.

Claiming politicians and the "chief landowner" were the most active advocates of this site, the "Journal" declared a "no" vote "will be the beginning of cleaning out the politicians from the management of the schools."

The "Republican" stood squarely behind the school board.

Defeat of the loan would mean double shifts of teachers in the high school and sessions from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 p.m. to six p.m., it warned.

"Spare the Dollar, Spoil the Scholar" pleaded school board advertisements in the "Republican" signed by Dr. H. W. Diller, board president.

On February 26, 1927, the "Republican" issued an unprecedented plea for a "yes" vote--a 16-page tabloid supplement to its regular Saturday edition, spreading over it sketches of the proposed school, endorsements by organizations and individuals, and "rebutting" 21 points of opposition made in an unsigned letter, "To the Taxpayers of Pottsville," which was widely distributed.

On Monday night, February 28, a four-division parade of school children marched the streets, handing out heart-shaped cardboard pleas, "Have a Heart, Vote for the School loan." A ten-man team of prominent Pottsvillians spoke at scattered rallies, urging support of the loan.

It was futile.

At the special election the next day, voters of 11 precincts cast ballots against the \$800,000 loan. Only four precincts favored it and the proposal lost, 3,091-2,061.

But it was abundantly clear at the third election in 1930 that Pottsville needed a new high school without further delay and most responsible elements of the community tacitly backed the proposed \$900,000 loan.

This time the "Journal" was behind the school board and endorsed the directors' selection of the Fisher Hill site on which the present building is erected.

The "Republican" did not oppose the board but argued for acceptance of an offer of the American Legion for a tract of land running approximately from 12th to 16th street on Laurel.

It urged that voter opposition to the loan would be dimmed if the board abandoned its "secrecy" and insisted on employment of local architects, specified local labor and local material--"a statement that local steel beams would be used would automatically mean 1,200 votes for the loan from local steel mill workers and their families"--and declared publicly what the name of the new building would be "so everyone will know whether it is to be named after present members of the board, past educators, some national character or simply Pottsville High School."

The "Journal" maintained the Fisher tract was free from danger from worked-out coal holes. The "Republican" said the board rejected a "free" site because of coal measures and agreed to pay \$65,000 for one "which is more dangerous from a mining standpoint."

But there were 1,016 pupils in the high school; only 652 were enrolled when the first loan was defeated in 1924.

And the voters were clearly fed up with controversy.

On December 16, the school loan (\$700,000 for a new building, \$65,000 for the site, \$35,000 for an athletic field and \$100,000 for furnishing and equipment) carried every ward, lost only four precincts and was approved, 2,449 to 1,571.

On the day after the special election, the "Journal" commented that "never before in its history has Pottsville raised itself to the civic heights that it did yesterday. With recession and business stagnation, people came out and voted to go into debt \$900,000 in order to make a notable achievement."

The "Republican" observed there had been no organized opposition at the polls and that made it clear sailing for enthusiastic workers demanding school facilities.

Now, it rationalized, "a real school system is assured."

And when the building was first occupied January 3, 1933, a progressive dream was realized.

THE SUPERINTENDENTS

In the 115 years since Elias Schneider was elected to head the school system, the Pottsville School District has had 10 superintendents excluding Charles W. Pitman, the school director-superintendent whose four-month term is treated separately in this history.

Schneider, the first superintendent, served four years from 1851 and his successor, Josiah P. Sherman, served from 1855 until his resignation in April, 1867.

By the time Sherman yielded the post to B. F. Patterson, the district's enrollment had grown from approximately 1,200 in 1853 to more than 2,200 and the superintendent's salary had advanced from the original \$700 to \$1,020 annually.

The third superintendent, Patterson, who had been high school principal from 1865 to 1867, was rewarded with a raise to \$108 a month. When he died July 9, 1906, at the age of 71, he had served 41 years aggregately as principal and superintendent, a record in the district.

Patterson's successor, Stephen A. Thurlow, who had been principal from 1881 until his election as superintendent in 1906, was the only local applicant in a field of 10 candidates. His starting salary was set at \$1,800 a year; the system had approximately 2,700 pupils.

Thurlow's 25-year tenure at the high school not only set a record for that post but when he became superintendent, high school graduates made up a \$2,000 purse as a tribute to his high school leadership.

Thurlow died January 4, 1912, and was succeeded by Joseph R. Tallman, a Porter Township native, who had entered the district's employ in 1910 as a grammar school principal. Tallman's tenure as superintendent was the briefest; he died on August 10 the same year of typhoid fever.

The next superintendent, E. R. Barclay, served from 1912 to 1918. He was the district's only superintendent who was a candidate for re-election, was re-elected, and then declined the post. On April 9, 1918, an active candidate for return to the position, Barclay was re-elected at a salary of \$2,400 a year. However, when two board members voted "no" to a proposal to amend the salary to \$2,600 a year, Barclay arose at the meeting and asked for his release, announcing that as of noon the same day he had been elected to another position.

The release was granted and George H. Weiss was elected the next month at \$2,500.

Clarence E. Toole, who succeeded Weiss in 1928, served a brief, two-year term notable for introduction of vocational training in the high school and the renaissance of the school's vocal and band programs.

His successor, L. A. BuDahn, continued the pattern of progress which opening of the new high school building spurred in 1933. BuDahn retired in 1948 after completing the longest tenure since Patterson's in the early days of the century.

The then high school principal, D. H. H. Lengel, advanced to the superintendency. Lengel, hailed as one of the district's best all-time administrators, retired in 1965 with 37 years of service as principal, district superintendent and Pottsville Area School System superintendent, a record second only to Patterson's tenure as principal and superintendent and six years longer than Thurlow's 31 years.

SUPERINTENDENTS

Elias Schneider	1851-1855
Josiah P. Sherman	1855-1867
B. F. Patterson	1867-1906
S. A. Thurlow	1906-1912
Joseph R. Tallman	1912-1912
E. R. Barclay	1912-1918
George H. Weiss	1918-1928
Clarence E. Toole	1928-1930
L. A. BuDahn	1930-1948
D. H. H. Lengel	1948-1962 1962-1965 (superintendent, Pottsville Area School System)
Alex G. Atty	1965-1966 (superintendent, Pottsville Area School System).

THE BIG THREE



B. F. PATTERSON
Principal 1865-1867
Superintendent 1867-1906



S. A. THURLOW
Principal 1881-1906
Superintendent 1906-1912



D. H. H. LENGEL
Principal 1928-1948
Superintendent 1948-1965



BICYCLES BUILT FOR THREE

Superintendent B. F. Patterson, shown here with two "small fry" at the Jackson Street School Building, used a bicycle to make his appointed rounds of the town's school buildings in the 90's.

THE REMARKABLE MR. PITMAN

All known histories credit Elias Schneider with being Pottsville's first superintendent of schools.

They have reckoned without the remarkable Charles W. Pitman.

New Jersey-born Pitman graduated from Dickinson College in 1838, came to Pottsville the same year and took charge of the Pottsville Institute for six years.

In 1844, he was elected to the school board and was one of the five directors who on December 14, 1846, resolved "to elect a general superintendent over the common schools in this borough."

Director Pitman, the minutes record, had a majority of votes and was elected superintendent for a year at \$500--and continued as one of his own bosses, as a school director.

Without assigning any reason except that he couldn't devote as much time to the superintendency as it required, he resigned on April 2, 1847.

The superintendency was vacant for another four years when Mr. Schneider accepted the post but Mr. Pitman went, politically, far beyond a school directorship.

He was elected as a Whig to the 31st Congress (1849-1851), then engaged extensively in the lumber business, became a Republican and was elected sheriff in 1870.

He had been sheriff only a few months when he died June 8, 1871, the only school director-superintendent in Pottsville's history.

THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Neither long tenure nor high salaries were the rewards of the first 13 principals of the high school.

The first, Elias Gotchell, was elected "principal teacher of the male school (in 1853) at a salary of \$45.88 1/3 a month, being at the rate of \$550 for the year."

Gotchell lasted a single year and none of his 12 successors until the endurable S. A. Thurlow took over in 1881 lasted more than five years at the job, albeit B. F. Patterson moved out of the principalship to the higher post of superintendent willingly after two years.

Four principals served single years; one, as few as three months.

Thurlow's 25 years in the principalship established a record yet unequalled.

Starting at \$1,080 at the rate of \$120 a month (he missed the first month of a 10-month term), he wound up his 1906 year as principal with a pay of \$1,710 (200 days of teaching and five days at the county institute).

In the next 22 years, principals came and went--six--before D. H. H. Lengel assumed the post in 1928 for an even two decades.

Incumbent Miles S. Kiehner has been principal since 1948.

HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Elias Gotchell	1853-1854
Josiah P. Sherman	1854-1855
J. B. Phillips	1855-1859
Jackson Graves	1859-1860
Joseph E. Jackson	1860-1865
B. F. Patterson	1865-1867
J. J. Cake	1867-1868
S. R. Thompson	1868-1868
N. P. Kinsley	1868-1870
William H. Haskell	1870-1872
Samuel H. Kaercher	1872-1874
Edward E. Swallow	1874-1877
John E. Shull	1877-1881
S. A. Thurlow	1881-1906
J. J. Kehler	1906-1909
W. E. Cate	1909-1911
George H. Weiss	1911-1918
Earl K. Diehl	1918-1925
Willard K. Bell	1925-1926
Frank W. Moser	1926-1928
D. H. H. Lengel	1928-1948
Miles S. Kiehner	1948-1962 1962-1966 (principal, Pottsville Area School System)

THE SCHOOL DIRECTORS

It has been characteristic of Pottsville school boards that their members have been, by far and large, citizens of cosmopolitan views, business-trained, and zealous in their interest in the public school system.

From the first board, which included a lawyer and physician, to the present, directors have been recruited from many walks of life and have been in many instances among the community's leaders.

It is impractical, of course, to list the names of hundreds of men--and a few women--who have served on Pottsville school boards.

But it is possible to recall the names of some of the community's citizens who accepted service as school directors, some for long periods.

The first board consisted of six members, a pattern which was to continue for years.

Later, directors were elected from the borough's several wards and before the turn of the century the number mushroomed to 21 members, three from each of the town's wards. In fact when the Yorkville schools entered the district in 1907, upon the consolidation of the boroughs of Pottsville and Yorkville, the new area brought along its six directors and for a time there were 27 men on the combined board.

Principal objection to the representation-by-ward pattern was the requirement that a director who moved from one ward to another must offer his resignation because he could no longer legally represent his old ward.

But finally, in 1911, under a new provision of the school code, it reverted to seven members, the present number.

An analysis of the members of the 1869 board reveals just how representatives were the town's 15 school directors.

The board's president was David A. Smith, a clothing merchant. The secretary, Christopher Little, and another member, John A. Passmore, were attorneys.

The others: J. H. Sigfried, a coal shipper; Peter W. Sheaffer, a geologist; A. F. Mortimer, livery stable proprietor; J. Albert Huntzinger, president of the Pennsylvania National Bank; William Fox, dry goods merchant; Joseph Derr, stove and iron foundry proprietor; George Martz, architect; William E. Boyer, tobacconist; Solomon Hoover, stove store proprietor; Henry R. Edmonds, deputy collector for the United States Internal Revenue Service, and George B. Snyder and William D. Hodgson, clerks.

Before the turn of the century there were such prominent members as Benjamin Bannan, distinguished editor of the "Miners' Journal" who was a board member 15 years and its president 14 years; August Knecht, publisher of the German-language "Amerikanische Republikaner;" B. F. Pomroy, the iron industrialist; Charles Baber, the coal magnate and cemetery founder, and G. C. Schrink, the town's postmaster.

Major Levi Huber, a member of the board 29 years and its president 17 years in the late 1800's, was a bookkeeper for Yuangling's Brewery.

First board member, Enos Chichester, the physician, was followed by a number of fellow practitioners. In 1911, three of the seven board members prefaced their names with "Dr."--Thomas W. Schwalm and A. L. Gillars, physicians, and P. K. Filbert, dentist. There were at least two other dentists in later years, Dr. G. W. Wadlinger and Dr. J. F. Flaig.

There were the lawyers, among them W. K. Woodbury, F. W. Bechtel, C. F. Muehlhof, S. H. Kaercher, C. W. Pitman the director-superintendent, Edgar Downey, Elwyn Jones and incumbent Donald Dolbin.

Downey, a director for 21 years and president for 10 years at the time of his death in 1953, was one of the board's most distinguished members of recent memory. He not only "fathered" many of the district's patriotic demonstrations but was the board member with the highest scholastic mark in his high school days (general average, 99.7, class of 1909).

Two clergymen served on the board aggregately for more than three decades, Dr. J. H. Umbenhen, a Lutheran, from 1911 to 1925, and Dr. Howard W. Diller, an Episcopalian, from 1925 to 1943 and who was board president 15 years.

John W. Conrad, a turn-of-the-century member, was a justice of the peace and a contemporary, C. N. McGinnes, the board's treasurer, was naturally enough a teller at the Safe Deposit Bank.

The town's first burgess, Francis B. Nichols, attended the forepart of the initial meeting, then resigned. But former mayor F. Pierce Mortimer was a member of the board which built the present high school.

There were two female members in the 20's, Mrs. Sarah P. Householder, who was elected in 1921, re-elected in 1927 and served until her death in 1928, and her successor, Mrs. E. S. Sheets, who filled the unexpired term until 1929. And Miss Dorothy K. Critz, who was a member for a six-year term from 1955 and whose father, Francis, superintendent of the P. & R. C. & I. Co. shops, was a board member for 26 years in the late 1800's.

One of the electorate's most significant tributes to the school board was given in the 1911 "turnover" election when the board was reduced by law from 21 members to seven. Five of the "old" directors, Dr. P. K. Filbert, Walter H. Sterner, Dr. A. L. Gillars, Dr. L. W. Swalm and Francis Critz, were returned to office and only two new members, Rev. J. H. Umbenhen and Robert A. Reid, were elected.

Reid was one of the two best-remembered father and son combinations. He served until his death in 1929, board secretary for 14 years, and his son, William, was a member from 1935 to 1953.

F. L. Lamont, the photographer, was a member in the late 1890's. His son, L. D. Lamont, a mining engineer and colliery superintendent, served from 1943 to 1955.

There was even a great-grandfather, grandfather and grandson succession. Great-grandfather George Martz was a member from 1869 through 1873, Grandfather Lloyd Martz in the '90's, and Grandson Lloyd L. Martz from 1935 to present.

In fact, there was a fourth Martz, Peter S., who was elected in May, 1850, and served until January, 1852, when he was summarily dropped by his fellow directors for non-attendance at meetings.

Grandson Lloyd Martz is the district's last president and his 31 years service ranks close behind the 33 years of Director Howard S. Fernsler who holds the all-time record. Runner-up was William F. Scheerer, a hosiery manufacturer and merchant tailor, whose sudden death in 1909 ended board service of 32 years, 16 as secretary.

Fernsler, who has been board secretary continuously since 1936, has held this post longer than any predecessor.

And so there were newspaper reporters, store keepers, realtors, bankers, business men of all descriptions--possibly no bakers or candle-stick makers but at least one butcher--Grandfather Lloyd Martz, circa 1895.

FOOTBALL

The date was October 6, 1893, and the place was Agricultural Park.

A team known as the Pottsville Engineering Corps and one representing Pottsville High School, coached by Harry Womelsdorf, clashed.

The final score was P.H.S 12, the Engineering Corps 0.

The "Miners' Journal" printed that much and nothing more because, after all, it was only a football game.

But, as far as can be learned from newspaper accounts and other sources, it was the first football game P.H.S. played.

There may have been scheduled games prior to that "first" day but, if so, they have been lost to history.

It is known that football existed in Pottsville at least a year earlier.

The same Harry Womelsdorf, in 1892, organized the Y.M.C.A. Club and on Thanksgiving Day his "Y" team met Ashland at Dolan's Park. A small crowd watched Womelsdorf make two touchdowns and kick one goal, and Brigham make a single touchdown, and the Pottsville team triumphed, 14-0.

But there is no printed reference to Pottsville High on the gridiron until that early October day against the Engineering Corps.

But by the time the 1893 season had ended, P.H.S. had won six games and lost three and the "first" year's venture appeared to have been a successful one.

The second game at Dolan's Park on October 17 found P.H.S. defeating the Y.M.C.A., 6-0, and on October 21 the Pottsville Cadets were whipped 18-4 in spite of the fact, observed the "Journal," that "the referee (Mr. Knittle) made a few mistakes but both sides were very much pleased with the umpire (Mr. Whitney)."

Four days later the high school suffered its first setback "in one 20-minute half" when the Alumni triumphed, 12-0.

Seemingly another game was lost, to Ashland, on October 28, but no score was printed and it wasn't until November 11, when Ashland was edged out, 4-0, that the "Journal" casually referred to an earlier Ashland game, inferring the first Ashland tilt was lost but not actually saying so.

A team known only as "A. Heebner" downed P.H.S. 8-6 on November 1 but then there were three straight victories and a successful season was in prospect.

The Ashland game on November 11 at Dolan's wound up in a wrangle; many games in earlier days did. P.H.S. was leading 4-0 when Referee Sallada, incidentally of Ashland, awarded the game after 10 minutes of the second half "when Ashland refused to continue play."

A foul had been committed, and, apparently, Ashland couldn't see it that way. "Most of the spectators thought it was a put-up job of Ashland because they saw no other way of scoring," ~~crowed~~ the "Journal."

"The attendance was fair (at 10¢ a head) but the boys think they ought to have more encouragement in that line," the "Journal" commented.

Then came the two crowning games of the season--the first on November 18 when P.H.S. and Reading launched what was to become the oldest high school series in Pennsylvania.

The line-up of this 10-4 Pottsville victory at Dolan's Park is the first printed of a P.H.S. team.

It comprised Helms, left end; Nuss, left tackle; Thomas, left guard; Griffiths, left half back; Brigham, quarter back; Boyer, center rush; Althouse, full back; Doyle, right half back; Dodds, right guard; Troutman, right tackle, and Dengler, right end.

Althouse and Thomas each scored touchdowns at four points each and Brigham kicked a two-point goal.

"After a few more sharp plays, the referee (Mr. Knittle) called the game" and Pottsville-Reading history had been made.

There was a final victory over another Reading team, Selwyn Hall, at Dolan's on November 25. When it wound up, P.H.S. had swamped the visitors, 37-12. There were goals galore from the ground and ~~five~~ from the field but whether Althouse, Griffiths and Thomas made which depends on which newspaper a Pottsville fan read--the "Journal" and "Republican" credited different players with varying scores.

It was all very satisfying when the '94 team won five games and lost three (104 points against 46) and the town exulted.

But there was 1895.

The ~~Crimson~~ and White year book, Norman J. Beisel editor, said flatly: "In reviewing the football season of '95, we can come but to one conclusion that it was a flat failure. Two things are mainly to be blamed for this; namely, the lack of interest manifested by the school and the indifference of the management."

But one game was played, the ~~Crimson~~ and White said, and that ended in defeat (Minersville 8, P.H.S. 6). Captain Firey and Prof. B. S. Simonds, the manager, both resigned.

"Without interest and without the assistance of every individual member of the school, it will continue to fail," warned the ~~Crimson~~ and White.

But there were better days to come--much better--albeit the home games were played on fields P.H.S. could scarcely call home and there was insufficient equipment for the candidates.

After years at Dolan's Park, ending in 1923, the home eleven played on the Yorkville Yanks baseball field west of 19th and West Market Streets. Next was the ill-fated, soggy Westwood field, "the old brickyard," and later the field at 12th street commonly known as the "dump."

There was no field at all in 1931 and the "home" games were played at Minersville.

Then in 1932, the present 16th street field was used for the first time.

Lights were installed in 1935 and the story of Veterans Memorial Stadium--its size, beauty and seating accommodations--is familiar history.

There were the bad seasons in modern P.H.S. grid history--like 1926 when the team won a single game, scored in only two games and was shut out in the other seven. And in 1941, when a polio-curtailed season wound up 0-6-1. And in '42, when the count was one win and 10 defeats, and in '58 when all 11 games were lost.

But there were the good years, too.

The team, for instance, of Coach Major Blake in 1905 which wound up 4-0-2. And Walter Farquhar's 1919 club (8-1).

And then the golden years of Tubby Allen's razzle-dazzle football (1934-1942) when a single game was lost in 1937 and the Big 15 title was won in 1938 (10-1-1). And Nick Kotys' two big years, 1946 (10-0-1) and 1948 (10-1-1) which wound up with 443 points to the opponents' 77.

Felix Kadel came on in 1949 to win the Keystone League title (9-1-1), lost only one game in 1950 (10-1) to Reading; topped it off in 1951 with a 9-2 regular season, winning the Keystone championship and the Southern Conference crown only to lose to an overpowering Swoyerville team for the overall Conference title.

Ed Bossick's 1953 team (8-2-1) won the Keystone League title and Bill Flynn's 1961 team (9-2) tied for the Keystone championship and was second in the Eastern Conference.

And, in 1964, Bill Ruddy's club for the Pottsville Area School System with a 10-0-1 record was the school's most successful eleven since 1946.

There were some less successful teams sandwiched in between the era of Allen and present coach but in between there were all sorts of records and all sorts of excitement.

Such as the first and only night football double header in the school's history in 1935 (P.H.S. 12-0 over Pine Grove and 27-0 over Schuylkill Haven); the most consecutive games without defeat (18 by the 1944-45-46 teams); longest winning streak at home (27 from 1947 to 1951); most consecutive games without being shut out (44 from 1948 to 1952); the record breaking paid attendance at a single game (16,942 against Hazleton in 1938), and an overall season paid attendance of 65,695 in 1947.

It has been a long time since that first 1893 game with the Pottsville Engineering Corps and the first school cheer (probably 1895), "Je-he, Je-ha, Je-hess-hess-hess, Pottsville High School, P.H.S."

And since that dashing 1901 team trotted proudly onto the field with the first full uniforms in the school's history, Crimson sweaters with white turtle-neck, white waist bands and white cuffs, and sporty Crimson and White stockings.

BASKETBALL

It took only five years for founder J. A. Naismith's new game of basketball to reach Pottsville from Springfield, Mass., Y.M.C.A. College.

But the early years of this new indoor sport at Pottsville High School were modest, often doleful, ones.

Until the 1896-97 season, athletic-minded boys could play football or join the Riding Club, Tennis Club, Fencing and Singlestick Club, and Cycle Club or race in the field meet.

The maiden year for the basketball five, Gus Swaving, Clarence Whitehouse, Gil Roehrig, John Sharp and T. Collins, was a short but successful one. It played two games against the Y.M.C.A. at the then "Y", 311 West Market Street, and won both, 10-7 and 17-8.

Basketball won its way onto the P.H.S. sport scene slowly and sometimes, it seems, grudgingly.

There was always the problem of a basketball court. First games were played at the Y.M.C.A., then at Hummel's Hall on North Centre Street until it burned in 1908.

By that time there were some fair teams and at least one good one.

There is no reference to any team in the 1897-98 issue of the Crimson and White. But the 1899-1900 season was described as a "very successful" one. Four games were played; the only loss was an 8-7 one to Allentown. The 1900-1901 season saw an 8-5 record but three of the games were against the "Post Graduates" and four were against the Commercial School.

Then in the 1901-1902 season a full-fledged season of 20 games was played. The team won 16 of these including one very low-score game (11-0 vs. Villanova Prep) and a high-score one (69-18 against the Y.M.C.A.).

It was the first P.H.S. club to play anything resembling an "outside" schedule and stands as the best until the 1909-1910 five which won nine including a 35-3 victory over Lebanon, losing only the last game to York Collegiate Institute, a game which if won may have qualified the Crimson and White for the state title, it is claimed.

But the biggest obstacle to successful basketball was lack of a suitable playing court. After the loss of Hummel's Hall, the team switched back to the Y.M.C.A., then moved to the Armory upon its completion in 1914.

The new Patterson Building addition had no gymnasium unless the cramped, low-ceiling room in the basement which discouraged any sort of an "arch" shot could be called one.

Practice, often as not, was held in the barren and frequently unheated Dimmerling's Hall in Yorkville.

Until 1924, the Armory's seating accommodations were two rows of chairs flanking the playing floor on the north and south sides and it was a proud day when the first bleachers were installed.

Then, when the Armory became unavailable, it was the cramped Moose Hall, or, at least once, the ultra-spacious Charlton's Hall until opening of the present high school.

Basketball renaissance started in the 1923-24 season with a 13-10 record but the next season Chet Rogowicz's club won 20 of 29 games, the Schuylkill-Carbon League title and was the first to represent the school at the University of Pennsylvania Tournament.

Randolph Grimmet's 1925-26 five won the newly organized Eastern Pennsylvania Interscholastic Basketball League title that season, toppling Pottstown 37-22 in a game played within a "cage" at Reading. It was a league playoff; P.H.S. had lost undisputed claim to the title in a game at Coatesville's swimming pool-basketball court the previous week.

It was to be the last P.H.S. team to win the title of the league, one of the state's fastest, for another 16 years.

Then, in 1941-1942, undoubtedly one of the school's best all-around teams ~~not~~ only won the league title and the district championship but advanced to the eastern quarter finals of the state playoffs before losing to Berwick, 30-28. Coach Al Sadusky's club wound up with a 22-4 record.

There was a longer wait for the next league flag, 22 years, when the top-notch PASS 1963-64 club of Coach Ken Kline won East Penn honors, only to lose 77-69 in the district 11 playoffs against Catasauqua.

But in the interim there were such highlights as individual members winning the league's scoring title or league's most valuable player crown, always in the company of some of Pennsylvania's fastest high school fives.

ON TRACK AND FIELD

Today it might be cross-country but in the 1895-96 school year it was the "Paper Chase."

"This is one of the most healthful and beneficial exercises known as it develops the muscles gradually," commented the Crimson and White.

The season's first chase was from Garfield School to Barefield to Fishbach to the "Old School House," to the Powder Mill to Bull's Head and "then home," a distance of eight miles.

The four-man "Hounds" team finished in an hour and 24 minutes, four minutes ahead of the "Hares."

It was so successful that a second chase was held, all of 12 miles and all the way to Second Mountain. Someone marked the trail too faintly at First Mountain and the "Hounds" returned, thinking the chase was over. Somehow, both the "Hares" and "Hounds" returned simultaneously and "led to a discussion which has not yet been settled."

These chases and the track and field meet of June 12, 1896, are the first recorded of the minor sports, track and field.

Actually, the school's track and field sports revolve around two men, "Prof." John F. Murray, coach from 1907 to 1932 and then trainer for another 20 years, and Carlton "Pete" Sterner, coach from 1936 to the present.

First P.H.S. winner at the Penn Relays was in 1924 after more than a quarter century of effort. Sterner was a member of the 1928 first place team but interest in the team's participation in the Relays has ebbed over the years.

The Murray-Sterner combination developed outstanding athletes in both track and field. Sterner's proteges in the District 11, P.I.A.A., Track and Field events set exceptional records, particularly in the post-World War II period when they won four consecutive meets in the period 1948 through 1951.

Gym teams contributed their share towards interest in the minor sports. Organized in 1928-29, the sport flourished in the period between 1936 and 1951 when Coach Homer Wilbur's teams won eight P.I.A.A. state titles.

Other minor sports, still current, are wrestling, first begun in the 1935-36 season and revived several years ago; cross-country, still serving as the training area for future football teams, and baseball.



1894 FOOTBALL TEAM

Front Row, L. to R.—Gus Swaving, Tod Brigham, Milt Fiery, Ulysses Nuss, Ben Tyson, Maisch Kennedy, Otto Farquhar.
 Middle Row—John Sharp, Clarence Boyer, Ben Griffiths, Clarence Dengler, Horace Smith. Back Row—Frank Smith, Bob Ryon, Ben Troutman.

EARLY FOOTBALL TEAM

The 1894 football team, posing on the steps of the then high school building at Fifth and West Norwegian Streets, had a 5-3 record, scoring 104 points against the opponents.
 46. P. H. S. football began in 1893; no photograph of this team is known to exist.



BASKETBALL TEAM — 1899 - 1900

The Team: Whitehouse (manager), Tyson (captain), Roehrig, Reilly, Collins.

The Record: P. H. S. 29, Y. M. C. A. 25

P. H. S. 31, Reading 22

P. H. S. 15, Port Carbon 7

Allentown 8, P. H. S. 7



BASEBALL TEAM — 1897

MEMBERS: D. Lloyd, pitcher; G. Swaving, catcher; H. Womelsdorf, first base; C. Gay, second base; D. Green, shortstop; H. Boyer, third base; F. Brumm, left field; J. Brigham, center field; F. Moore, right field. SUBSTITUTES: C. Whitehouse and E. Bearstler.



RELAY TEAM — 1897

MEMBERS: G. Hamilton, R. Ryon, C. Hayes, G. Hayes.

SUBSTITUTES: G. Swaving, C. Whitehouse.

THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The earliest days may have taken education out of the home but in a very literal sense they put it right back into the houses.

So scarce were suitable buildings for use as class rooms when the "common school" concept began in 1836 that the earliest school boards used almost any available space--private homes particularly, small store rooms, church basements.

There were, of course, no class rooms as such when the first public schools opened here and the board used the old Friends' Meeting House on Sharp Mountain, a site only identified as Centre and Mahantongo Streets, Storer's House, and the old log school house on North Centre Street.

There can be no actual record of the number and location of all buildings used as schools. Often the school board minutes and newspaper reports of school board proceedings referred to school buildings put into use as merely "the new school" or "school no. 1" or "school no. 2" without further describing or identifying the location.

But there were buildings used for class room purposes almost everywhere in the first few decades, quite apart from the few buildings erected solely for school purposes.

Church buildings were highly favored because they had small auditoriums or basements able to be quickly converted into make-shift school class rooms.

The Universalist Church on Adams Street was a female school for some time at a rental of \$60 a year. The basement of the First Presbyterian Church, basement of the Second Presbyterian Church and the old Second Methodist Episcopal Church on Second Street, behind the present Y.M.C.A. building, were just a few, rented at from \$27 to \$37.50 annually.

It is known that the old Paschal Institute School on Hotel Street, at the western "dead end" of Morris Street was a public school at one time. Sometimes it is described as the Morris Addition School. There is also reference to the "Port Carbon Road School House" long before the existence of the Orchard School building.

Nearly 120 years ago, the district paid \$1,578 for a brick school building at the rear end of the "Welsh Church" on Norwegian Street, presumably a predecessor school to the present Garfield Building.

When the Fishbach school was under construction, St. John's Episcopal Chapel at Fishbach and the engine room of the Good Will Fire Company were used as school rooms. There was a small building at York Farm until the 1920's which the Lehigh Valley Coal Company rented for \$10 a year.

As late as 1925, after the first high school loan had been rejected, Reber's factory at 14th and West Market Streets was used as a school.

There was even a portable building behind the present Patterson building, used in the 1930's because of school congestion.

And, then, there is always the basement "storie" of the "Catholic Church," referred to in the chapter, "The School At St. Patrick's." And an impossible-to-identify reference to a school building on the south side of East Norwegian Street.

In some instances, present school buildings were preceded by smaller buildings to which rooms were added; then the entire structures were razed to accommodate entirely new buildings.

First "full-fledged" building erected was the Sharp Mountain School, referred to in many subsequent years as the Bunker Hill Building, which was erected on a lot on Schuylkill Avenue bought for \$450.

There were 642 pupils in the district when the board authorized this building in July, 1850, paid J. P. Lykens \$15 for his "draft" of the new school and awarded the contract to J. H. and D. E. James for \$5,500.

By the time the building was finished in February, 1851, the enrollment had grown to 750 and the cost of the school to \$6,609. Boys were transferred to the building in April and the building formally became the first high school ten years later.

At the end of the 1851 term, there was an average of 73 scholars for each teacher, much higher than the average per teacher in the town's 10 private schools which numbered 522 pupils.

The popularity of private schools at the time was reflected by the number of such schools. The value of their property, \$15,000, was identical with the value of public school property.

These schools were enumerated as: Pottsville Academy, Elias Schneider and three teachers, 90 enrolled; St. Patrick's School for Boys, one teacher, 38 pupils; Young Ladies Institute, Fifth and Market Streets, A. Pryor director, 52 pupils; St. Joseph's School, Seventh and Mahantongo Streets, four female teachers, 125 pupils; Miss Allen's Young Ladies School, Centre and Mahantongo Streets, 30 pupils; Miss A. Straub, basement of the Second Methodist Episcopal Church, primary school for girls, 35 pupils; Seminary for Young Ladies, basement first Presbyterian Church, Miss Mary S. McCool director, 30 pupils; Primary Institute for Girls, Foster's Hall, Miss Mary Hay director, 35 pupils; Primary School for Girls and Boys, Courtland (now Arch) Street, Mrs. H. McDonald director, 47 pupils; and School for Boys and Girls, Centre Street, Silas Hough, 30 pupils plus 20 pupils in a night school.

The Sharp Mountain School, to be better known in later years as the Bunker Hill Grammar School with such well-known principals as William Owens, E. A. Thompson and R. W. Ziegenfus, lasted almost an even 75 years and was abandoned February 12, 1926, to give way to a new \$80,000 building occupied three days later.

The new building was to be abandoned later and leased to the present Pennsylvania State University as the major building of its Pottsville campus.

Next major building to be erected was the 101-year-old Centre Street School which was occupied September 25, 1865, and dedicated December 22 of the same year. This building is, of course, the outgrowth of the original log school house and a small stone school house erected in 1841.

At the time of its occupancy, enrollment in the district had risen to 2,200 and the building's cost was a "staggering" \$21,800 plus an extra \$9,500 allowance.

In spite of the record cost, the new building was worth it in the opinion of the "Miners' Journal" editor who commented "we don't believe there is a taxpayer in the borough who would regret paying his portion of the school tax if he would only visit the school of which we are speaking."

Not that the editor had attended the public dedication himself; he had been too busy, but a friend told him all about it.

Gone, everybody murmured, were the old-fashioned slab seats "many at such a height from the floor that the poor little urchin had to sit with his feet dangling in the air until his poor limbs were fairly numb with pain."

"Now we see beautiful cherry seats made in a great measure for the special comfort of the pupils," exulted the editor.

The continued congestion in the schools spurred enthusiasm for construction of a new school at East Norwegian and Jackson Streets.

This addition to the district's physical plant cost \$57,670 and opened in 1876, bringing to an estimated \$180,000 the value of the district's real estate.

The high school, which had been moved from the Bunker Hill building to the Academy building at Fifth and West Norwegian Streets in 1868, thereupon was re-located in the new Jackson Street building.

In another 18 years, the high school had moved again, this time to the new Garfield Building, now administration center of the district.

The Fifth Street site had housed a school of sorts even before the entrance of the common school concept onto the Pottsville scene. The first school on the site, a brick building in 1833, housed the Pottsville Institute and Academy which had outgrown its original home, the old Arcade Building on Centre Street.

In 1842, the school board bought the Academy property from the Miners Bank for \$1,200 and subsequently an addition was built at the site.

The present building, unveiled to the public March 2, 1894, cost \$63,391 including extras, sidewalks and paving. Its eight rooms on the first two floors accommodated not only the grade schools but the Commercial School. A main assembly room and three classrooms on the third floor were used exclusively for the high school.

Entirely ignored by earlier school histories is the existence of a school building at 12th and Market Streets for approximately 85 years.

First reference to the "Market Street Building" appears to be the board's award in 1881 to Contractor W. H. Knoll to erect a new building on the lot "bounded by Market, Wood and Lyons Streets" for \$2,800.

Subsequently, annexes, additions and new buildings were put up on the site, a modest \$1,385 annex in 1895; a 12-room building costing \$44,223 and named for B. F. Patterson, late superintendent of schools, in 1909; a "completion" job for \$6,939 in 1912, and finally the Patterson Addition, completed and opened in September, 1916, at a cost of approximately \$48,000.

The high school's enrollment of 485 pupils, of the district's 3,237, was transferred to the new building after a polio epidemic delayed opening of the schools until September 29, 1916.

The new school housed 1,169 high school and elementary grade pupils--one third of the district's enrollment--and the scholars found the large building a bit of a maze, particularly during their eagerness to leave with the ringing of the final bell. Principal George H. Weiss provided a pupil with a drum to beat a dismissal cadence and promptly "a noticeable improvement was observed in the marching."

The Patterson Building was the last major building erected until the new high school in 1933 with facilities and accommodations undreamed 80 years before when the first high school was established--the 1,499 seat auditorium, cafeteria, gymnasium, vocational rooms, library, domestic science and scientific facilities, music rooms, etal.

The Minor Buildings

The present Minersville Street building, erected in 1870, was preceded by at least one earlier school in addition to the Colored School (1843-1877) which occupied for some years space in the "African Church."

There has been a school on Race Street for many years. The building now on the site was enlarged in 1897 from a one-room school.

Numerous buildings in Fishbach and Jalappa were used for school purposes. At one time there were two schools in Fishbach--the Upper Fishbach and Lower Fishbach schools. The present building, in disuse for years and scheduled for demolition, was occupied September 5, 1905. The present Jalappa school was built in 1868.

The Orchard building, built at a cost of \$4,142, was opened January 3, 1899. Two rooms were added to the original structure in 1928 and it was closed in the 1963 term when pupil enrollment dropped at 62. The building was sold to the Ford School of Business in 1965.

Ex-Governor Martin Brumbaugh was speaker at the dedication of the Mount Hope building November 17, 1923. First sessions were held in the building two days later.

The old Yorkville building, razed in 1965, was erected in 1894. It was temporarily abandoned when the present school was built in 1927 but re-opened for a time when a pupil overage developed in 1934.



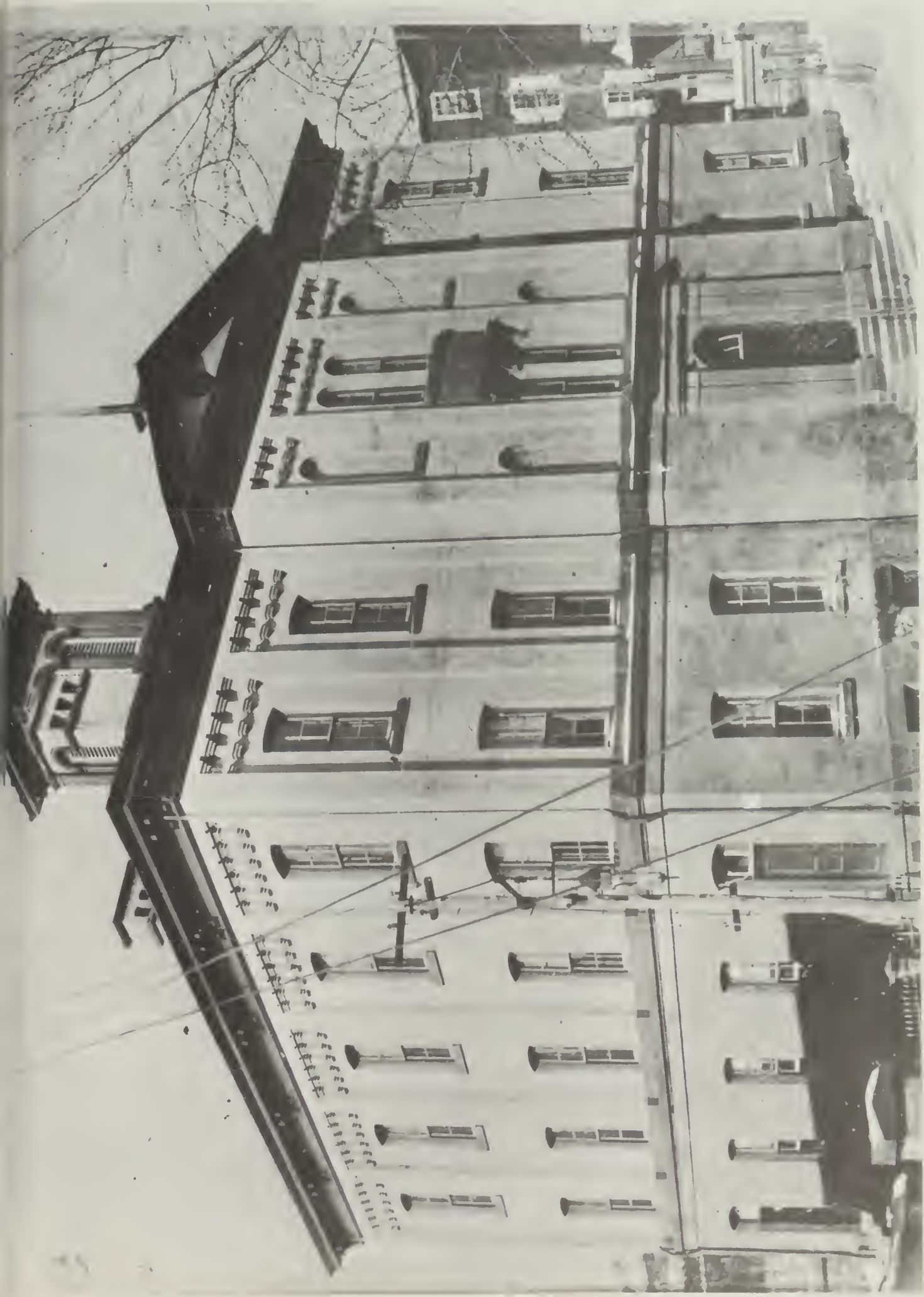
PROUD OLD GARFIELD

The \$63,000 Garfield School Building had hardly been opened in 1894 when the photographer, unwilling to wait until the sidewalks were in place, snapped this picture through the trees.



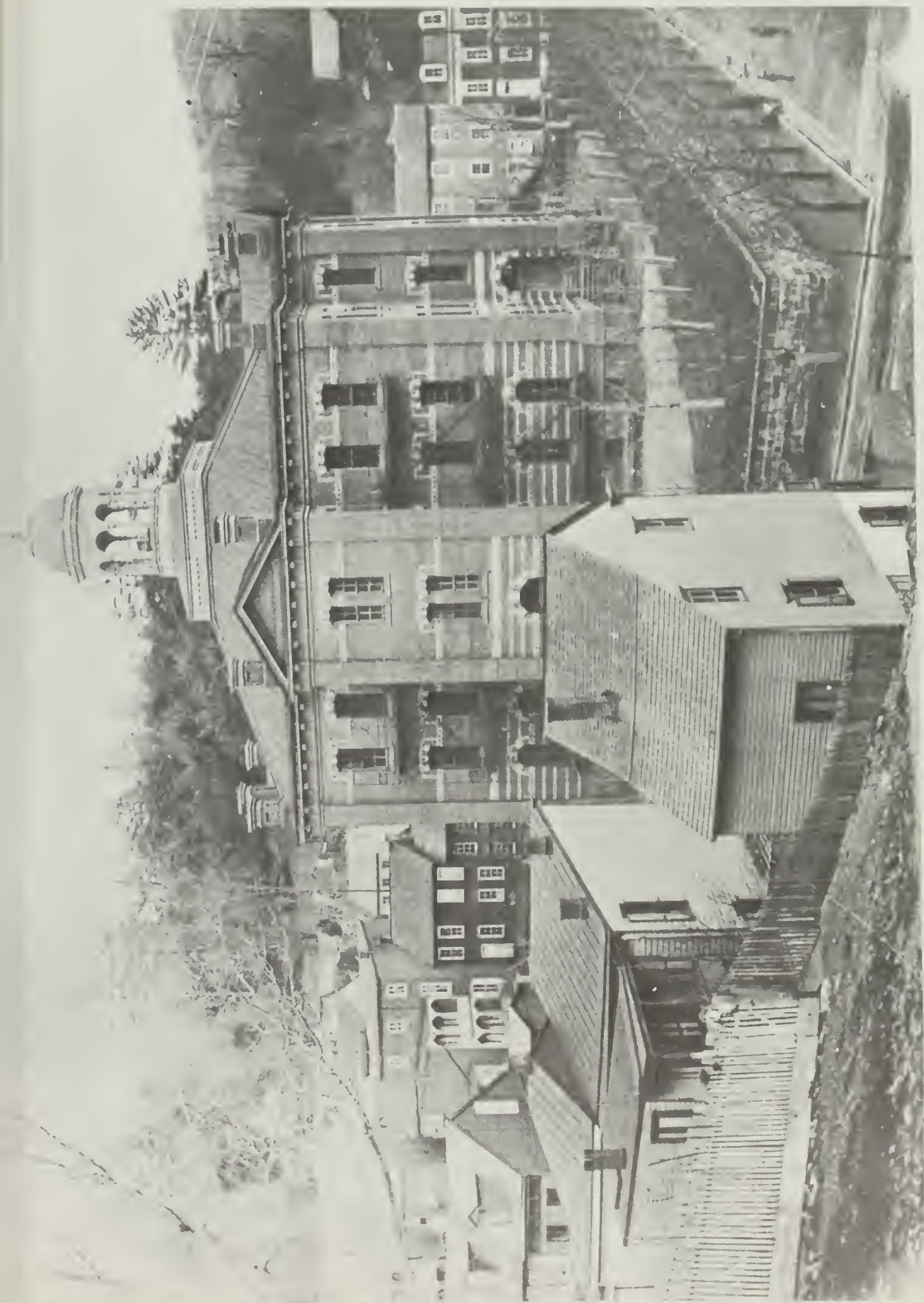
THE OLD BUNKER HILL BUILDING

First "full-fledged" school building erected by the Pottsville School District. The original building cost \$6,609 when it opened in 1851. Picture here, taken in the 1890's, shows the building as it appeared substantially when it was abandoned in 1926.



ONE HUNDRED AND ONE YEARS OLD

The street gas lamp, left center, has been changed to an electric lamp, but the exterior of the Centre Street School Building is much the same as the day it opened in 1865 at the "staggering" cost of \$31,400.



CENTENNIAL SCHOOL

Jackson Street School Building, opened in the Centennial Year of 1876, cost \$57,670 to construct. To get an almost unobstructed picture of the building, the photographer "shot" from the rear northern end. Greenwood Hill is uninhabited in the background.



THE SCHOOL ON HIGH STREET

The school on Race Street (nee High Street) is shown in the left foreground in this rare picture about 1890. An addition was built in 1897 and the street, while still steep, no longer resembles a mountain path.

POTPOURRI

being an assortment of interesting, if not-so-vital, information about the Pottsville School District from the first year until World War I changed a way of life.

FIRST TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS, FIRST PAYS AND FIRST RESIGNATION (1836):

The first teaching assignments had been made--John Porter (\$400 a year) and David Duncan (\$325) to the Friends' Meeting House, Mrs. Porter (\$200) to the Centre and Mahantongo Street School, Sophia Utley (\$200) to Storer's House, and Mary Whipple (\$200) to the North Centre Street Log School House.

The board promptly sensed that five teachers weren't enough for upwards of 290 pupils, so it hired Morgan Lewis at \$300 a year.

Neither was the first month's pay (\$27.08) enough for Mr. Duncan. (Others: Mr. Porter, \$33.33 $\frac{1}{3}$; Mr. Lewis, \$25; the female teachers, \$16.66 $\frac{2}{3}$).

Mr. Duncan promptly resigned "due to insufficiency of salary."

The board just as promptly raised his salary to \$400 a year and Mr. Duncan went back to his job at Friends' Meeting House.

FIRST "EXCHANGE" STUDENTS (1853)

Some Palo Alto pupils were attending Norwegian Township schools but, on the other hand, some Fishbach pupils were attending Pottsville schools. This seemed not quite right, somehow, to the Norwegian Township board. Why not "exchange" its Palo Alto pupils for the Fishbach pupils in the Pottsville schools? Everybody seemed to agree it was a good idea so the "exchange" was made.

ALMOST EXIT, THE HIGH SCHOOL (1861-1865)

Until 1862, it could not be said properly that P.H.S. graduates were awarded diplomas upon graduation. They graduated but there was no "sheepskin" to be framed. The Class of '62, seven boys and three girls, was the first to receive diplomas. No matter. The high school had virtually disappeared, anyway. Male pupils snubbed education for the higher wages paid in stores whose hired help had joined the Union Army.

TAX DODGERS (1864)

The board's balance was a slim \$38.18 and it needed the money, especially the yield from a tax imposed on watch owners, 50 cents on silver watches valued at \$20 upwards and a dollar on gold watches valued at \$50 upwards. It was surprising how few men carried watches in a town of 12,000 people--and in an age when a watch and chain were status symbols. According to tax returns, there were only 180 watches in all Pottsville (which was still better than Shenandoah which admitted ownership of only 22 watches, and Frackville, none). So stoutly did some "taxpayers" resent the watch tax that at least one appeared before the board and insisted "his" gold watch actually belonged to his wife. A school director said he knew the wife bought the watch before her marriage so the board reluctantly exonerated the "taxpayer."

THE FIRST "SPECIAL" SCHOOL (1874)

The "special" school concept for backward pupils is almost 100 years old.

In establishing such a school, the board's Committee on Organization said: "There are many good steady girls that are too slow at comprehending to go along at the rate that ordinary classes move, in this way they keep the classes back, and they are taken over the grounds so hurriedly that they retain little or no good results."

"Others are so irregular in their attendance as to make it impossible for them to keep up with an ordinary class. Another class of girls are kept at home to work until they are 12 or 13 years old and then are sent to school but for a few months and if sent to the regular grade would be in a primary school when the principal work is reading and spelling while they should be taught to write a letter."

"YEAR FOR GENERAL REJOICING" (1876)

It was Centennial Year, 100th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Typical of the acts of independence:

High school pupils petitioned the board to drop physiology and study Greek instead. Granted.

Pupils and teachers petitioned the board to limit school to a single 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. session the last two months of the term. Granted.

Teachers, asserting it was a "year for general rejoicing," asked the board to renew their certificates for the coming year instead of being compelled to pass an annual examination. Denied as illegal.

Directors, failing to have a quorum at their October meeting, were accused by the "Miners' Journal" of too many of the board "at the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia looking after the school marms."

THE SPEECHES WERE TOO LONG (1889)

Until 1889, there were full-fledged grammar school and high school commencement exercises at Union Hall (rent \$40 each).

But, everybody agreed, the speeches were too long.

First, grammar school teachers complained that "a number of pupils who were back with their studies would be unable to make a creditable exhibition on the stage and it would consume a great deal of valuable time."

Then it dawned on the high school graduates that the existing system of having every class member take part in the commencement program was "prolonging the entertainment to a very late hour (and) interest was greatly lessened..or was entirely lost."

Finally, the class of 1895 petitioned to have a speaking-musical program at morning class day exercises and schedule "only" 12 graduates to speak at the evening commencement program.

Inasmuch as the class had 34 members--and even 34 speeches were a great many--the board voiced an eager, unanimous assent.

Thereafter, commencement programs saw a dwindling number of such programmed items as "Standing Upon the Constitution," "The American Forest Girl," "Village Bells," "The Laurel Wreath" and "An Evening at the Ball" which had been typical recitations.

FREE BOOKS (1893)

The board had taken its first step in this direction in 1877 when it won the grudging approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to buy school books 40% cheaper than the catalog price and sell them to students at cost.

Until 1893, notices were inserted in newspapers listing "books needed in the high school" for the coming term and pupils were obliged to provide the approved books.

Typical requirement: 1st (senior) year, high school, Chase and Stewart's "Virgil" and Hutchinson's Physiology; second year, Chase and Stewart's "Caesar" and Elementary Geometry; third year, Harkness' Latin Grammar and Greenleaf's Algebra.

Then, when the board decided to buy the books, it ordered the superintendent to be in his office a half hour two afternoons a week to sell them.

MR. PATTERSON GETS A RAISE (1885-1905)

B. F. Patterson was high school principal for only two years but superintendent from 1867-1906. The building at 12th and West Market Streets bears his name.

But from 1885 to 1905 he was given only one raise--from \$1,700 to \$1,800 a year.

During the same span of years, Principal S. A. Thurlow did a bit better. His pay went from \$1,500 to \$1,700.

CRIMSON AND WHITE (1893)

The Class of 1893 established Crimson and White as the official colors of Pottsville High School. Until then, each graduating class adopted its own colors and these were considered the school colors--until next year, of course.

HI-JINKS IN THE GAY NINETIES

High school extra-curricular activities really began in the Gay Nineties.

Football, basketball, track and field, the bicycle club and other forms of sport came into their own on an organized basis.

There was organized music in the air--by the orchestra, the glee club and the mandolin and guitar club.

And if the "Crimson and White" is to be believed, the high school abounded with all sorts of nonsensical clubs and organizations.

Such as Knights of the Road, the Mum Social Club, the Magpies (for girls and blabber mouths), the Wandering Minstrels, H.O.G. (the eaters), Starvation Eating Club, C H I C K (never accept an invitation to dinner unless chicken is on the menu), Notoriety Club, Married Men's Organization, Pretzel Munchers, Freaks, and Gentlemen of Leisure.

Fully one third of the yearbook was devoted to these "clubs" but it is not to be supposed they existed. It was just a way of "poking fun" at the graduates whose names were listed as "club" members, much in the same manner today's "Hi-S-Potts" annual has its own pages of levity.

NUMBER PLEASE (1907)

After years of stalling on the proposal to install telephones in the schools, the board finally authorized the American Union Telephone Company to put 11 instruments in school buildings at \$15 a year.

It was fun for the students but a headache for the board.

Finally the 'phone company complained that "scholars of higher grades were using the phones for foolish messages."

Thereafter, said the board, telephones could be used by students only in the presence of teachers.

A WOMAN'S WORLD (1907)

R. A. Hausman was an applicant for instructor of music in the schools but the board was adamant.

Only female applicants would be considered said the board in an era before equal opportunity of employment was the law.

In deciding on a "system of music for our schools," directors elected a female, Miss Helen Robson, Lansing, Mich., at \$65 a month.

The superintendent thereupon proposed that a temperance song be adopted for the schools.

The matter was left in Miss Robson's hands and nothing more was heard about it.

THE JOINERS (1913)

There could be no more appropriate tribute to the late superintendents B. F. Patterson and S. A. Thurlow, said the board.

Than to create the B. F. Patterson and Stephen A. Thurlow Literary Societies at the high school.

Further, each high school student had to join one or the other and attend six public evening meetings in the school assembly room. And all high school teachers and the superintendent had to be honorary members and presumably attend the meetings, too.

HELP WIN THE WAR (1917)

The high school boys were shooting firearms even before the United States entered the war in April, 1917.

One hundred and four volunteered to take up the offer of the Pottsville Rifle Club to provide training in the use of firearms and target practice. (In 1918, the board voted military training in the high school).

There was little thought of graduation at the Hippodrome Theatre that year; instead class day and commencement were held in the high school.

German was eliminated from the curriculum and Spanish was substituted.

The board went along with the patriotic fervor of the times.

Any boy in good standing in grammar or high school, who joined the army or navy, was automatically advanced to the next grade or graduation, whichever the case.

But how're you gonna keep 'em down on the farm?

Well, the same applied to boys who engaged in farm work that summer, too.



MISS TILLIE B. BROWN.
 MISS KATE A. DERR.
 MISS CLARA E. FISHER.
 MISS LAURA A. FOX.
 MISS LOUISE M. HAMMEKEN.
 MISS MATTIE L. MILLER.
 MISS CATHARINE MCCAMANT.
 MISS CLARA ROSENGARTEN.
 MISS ANNA M. SHEETZ.
 MISS BERTHA M. STICHTER.
 MISS ANNIE K. STRANCH.
 MISS BESSIE M. THOMPSON.
 MISS AGGIE E. WESTON.
 MISS ANNA HOOVER.
 MISS MARY C. HILL.
 MISS MAMIE E. HUTCHINSON.
 MISS MARY T. KOUP.
 MISS SUE C. KAERCHER.
 J. CLAUDE BROWN.
 JACOB S. FOSTER.
 ROBERT MACNAMEE.
 ROBERT A. QUIN.
 C. WILLIAM ROEHRIG.
 ARTHUR L. SHAY.
 FRED. E. ZERBEY.

COMMENCEMENT INVITATION — CLASS OF '81

Miss Clara Rosengarten's 99.24 grade was the highest, but high school students' grades and attendance record were no secret; they were printed regularly in Pottsville newspapers. Commencement expenses were \$67.70, including \$30 rental for the Academy of Music.

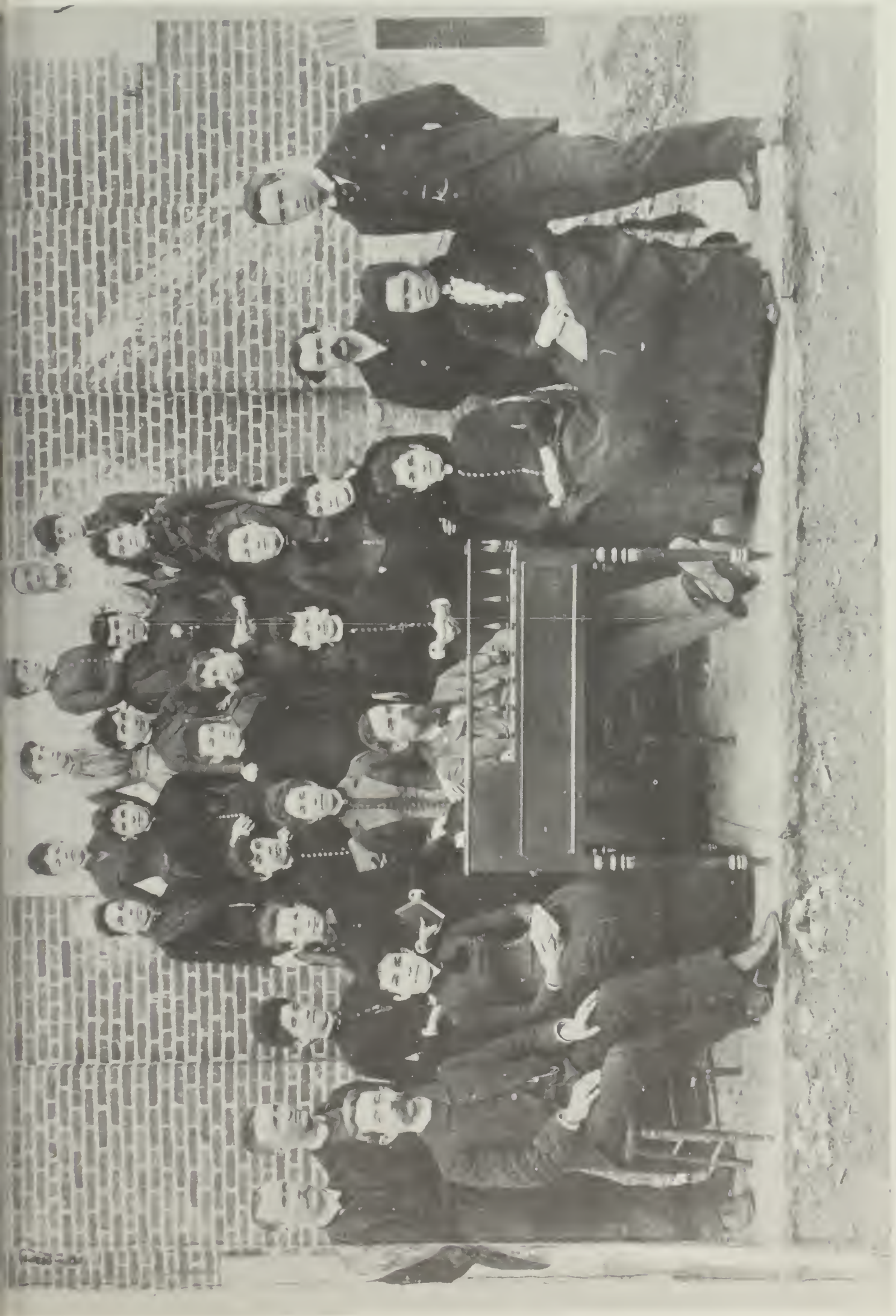


GRADUATING CLASS — 1896

Believed first picture of a graduating class published in a Pottsville High School year book.

CLASS OFFICERS: Claude L. Roth, president; Anna M. Morris, vice-president; Warren T. Hannum, secretary; Nellie T. Brown, treasurer.

FACULTY: S. A. Thurlow, principal; Miss Elena Roads, Mrs. S. R. Wells, B. S. Simonds.



TEACHING CORPS OF THE '90's

Twenty-one female and six male teachers, plus a janitor in the background, posed separately for a group picture in the early 1890's.

A STUDY: FISCAL AND ENROLLMENT

Pupil population of the Pottsville Area School System in 1966 was not quite 10 times as much as the enrollment disclosed by the first available statement of the Pottsville School District in 1839.

But, in the same period, cost of operating the schools was nearly 800 times higher!

This almost incredible increase in school expenditure is, of course, not the product alone of higher instructional costs, building expenses, debt service and normal higher-cost-of-everything associated with school operation.

It is due, in an increasingly large measure, to services undreamed in the first half of the 19th century, services such as kindergarten, vocational education, home economics, recreational programs and driver training to name a very few.

It is not to be supposed, either, that the direct cost of education to local taxpayers rose proportionate to the overall increase in cost.

State and state-federal aid to spur state-mandated or encouraged-programs of varied descriptions have reached the point that such aid now represents approximately 50 percent of PASS anticipated receipts.

The magnitude to which the fiscal program has grown is realized readily by examination of the 1964 audit of Pottsville Area High School activities.

These activities list 55 accounts ranging from the expanding Athletic Association to such accounts as the Organ Fund, Latin Club Fund, Library Fund and 51 others, and are quite apart from monies which taxpayers pay into the system for school operation.

Yet, in the year ending June 30, 1964, these 55 accounts alone expended \$79,493, higher than all the monies spent by the school district for the operation of the entire system, salaries of its 69 teachers and maintenance of its \$325,000 worth of property as late as 1905.

It was indeed a modest beginning reflected by the annual report of State Superintendent of Common Schools Francis R. Shunk, read in the House of Representatives on March 25, 1839, first available fiscal and enrollment report of Pottsville schools.

Superintendent Shunk reported cost of operating the district in 1839 was \$2,261 of which \$1,797 was paid for instructional cost, \$235 for renting school buildings, \$139 for fuel, \$83 for contingencies and \$7 for repairs.

Overall receipts including \$2,149 from "district taxes" and a state appropriation of \$731, appearing to indicate the district operated in black ink by some \$600.

The average monthly salaries for male teachers were \$32.64; for female teachers, \$17.

There were 167 male and 207 female pupils, a total of 374, or, said the report, "an average of 61 in each of the seven schools" which is bad arithmetic but at least Pottsville had bothered to make a report to the State which 212 districts accepting the common school system hadn't.

By 1850, there were 7,575 borough residents and 642 pupils, and expenses had inched to \$4,782. The average monthly salary for male teachers had actually decreased to \$27.75; for female teachers, to \$16.40. Cost per month for educating a pupil had inched up to $47\frac{1}{2}\phi$.

As the borough's population increased, public school education was more warmly embraced, enrollment advanced, and expenditures moved higher as a matter of course. But it was not until the immediate pre-Civil War days that expenses touched the \$10,000 mark although the town's population neared the 10,000 mark and enrollment had soared beyond 1,000 pupils.

Some patterns of district enrollment follow normal lines consistent with the growing population. Some are difficult of analysis nearly a century later, for example the reason for a decline of enrollment from 2,206 to 1,793 between 1865 to 1870, or a decline from 2,171 to 2,008 between 1880 and 1890 while Pottsville's population increased nearly 1,000.

But in a 20-year period, from 1850 to 1870, male teachers' salaries had about tripled, from \$27.75 to \$83.25 monthly, and female teachers' salaries, from \$16.40 to \$33.49 monthly.

The pattern of increased costs, modest as they were by present day standards, is quite clear as early as the 1865-1870 period. While enrollment declined by 400 pupils, costs doubled from \$13,034 to \$26,279.

Examined by five-year periods, enrollment and expenses climbed hand-in-hand from the turn of the century.

Enrollment mounted from 2,710 in 1905 to 4,631 in 1935. Expenditures, which were \$74,096 in 1905, topped the \$100,000 mark for the first time in 1910 (\$149,413) and had reached \$459,238 by 1935.

There are, of course, obvious explanations for pupil decreases in the post 1935 period, economic conditions, World War II, low birth rates, and increased parochial school enrollment which siphoned off public school enrollment.

The study by five-year periods reflects an all-time high enrollment of 4,631 in 1935 and a gradual decline until 1955 when it resumed an upward trend.

The current enrollment, 3,592, of the Pottsville Area School System represents the highest figure since 1940 and, of course, can be partly explained by the high birth rate of the last decade and inclusion of pupils from Port Carbon, Mt. Carbon and Mechanicsville.

In the early 50's, overall expenditures of the district moved past the million dollar mark and the current budget of \$1,482,968 is, of course, an all-time high. Most of this figure represents contributions to the Pottsville Area School System which has a 1966 budget of \$1,701,248.

In spite of the continuing higher costs of education, it is significant that the Pottsville School District's final budget message pointedly reminded that local taxes had not increased since 1960, indeed per capita taxes had been reduced \$5.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
1840	4,337	494	\$ 2,261
1845		759	3,893
1850	7,575	642	4,782
1855		1,160	8,446
1860	9,444	1,793	14,259
1865		2,206	13,034
1870	12,384	1,793	26,279
1875		-----	52,208
1880	13,253	2,171	51,495
1885		-----	44,935
1890	14,117	2,008	39,233
1895		-----	60,988
1900	15,710	-----	63,145
1905		2,710	74,096
1910	20,236	2,866	149,413
1915		3,474	104,518
1920	21,876	3,276	187,178
1925		3,888	439,351
1930	24,276	4,257	408,148
1935		4,631	459,238
1940	24,530	4,184	508,203
1945		3,002	490,347
1950	23,640	3,030	839,491
1955		3,105	1,029,817
1960	21,678	3,207	1,196,884
1966		3,592*	1,482,968**
			1,701,248***

* Pottsville Area School System enrollment

** Pottsville School District budget 1965-66

*** Pottsville Area School System budget 1965-66

(The table on this page reflects school enrollment and expenses by five-year periods since 1840. Blanks in some spaces indicate statistics not available. Expenditures taken from available records, treasurer's annual reports or auditor's reports. When statistics were not available for the exact years indicated above, figures shown are those of the nearest available year. Column of expenditures is intended to reflect the growing cost of operation of the district, in some instances had been adjusted to eliminate abnormal payment of debt obligations to avoid distorted picture of expenditures).

1866...AND A CENTURY LATER

(For the purpose of contrast, this chapter reflects a month in the operation of Pottsville schools in 1866 as indicated by official school board proceedings, and how the picture has changed an even 100 years later).

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Louisa Conrad had been suspended for refusing to provide a cover for her desk in the new Centre Street school building. This was a serious offense, serious enough for the board to spend a substantial part of a scheduled meeting for debating this refusal.

The new school building was, afterall, the showplace of Pottsville and the cherry seats and desks were the objects of wide admiration.

The school board's Building Committee had ordered each pupil to provide a cover for his desk to prevent scratching of the shiny surface or the imprint of jack-knife's carved initial.

Louisa's father admitted he had failed to give her a cover for the desk, but that was no reason the teacher should have seated the child on the floor for punishment (the teacher denied it). And besides, had the board ever adopted a formal regulation requiring covers?

The 12 directors, three from each of the town's four wards, admitted somewhat blushinglly they had overlooked adopting their committee's recommendation, so Louisa was ordered back to school with the stipulation she, and all other pupils, provide the proper cover.

It was a trifling matter, in retrospect, but important enough in 1866 to cover a full page of the board's minutes, more space than adoption of the year's budget was given.

The budget was all of \$26,247 including \$12,000 for teachers' salaries, somewhat higher than the \$10,806 instructional cost the previous year (which, in turn, is less than the \$17,000 spent today by the Pottsville Area School System for the summer recreation program payroll alone).

If the board's minutes are to be believed, directors didn't even elect teachers or set salaries, at least there is no such record. (The next year's minutes reflect the '66 salaries, however. The superintendent was raised from \$80 to \$108 a month for 1867, the high school principal from \$80 to \$93, and 20 female and one male teacher from \$30 to \$35 a month).

There was one vacancy, a teacher for the colored school.

The board's newspaper advertisement to fill this vacancy was to the point: "WANTED, a White Lady Teacher for the colored school of Pottsville. The school is of Primary grade, and averages about twenty pupils, male and female, mostly small. Salary, \$30 a month (calendar). School open at least 4 months...."

Janitors' salaries were meager, only \$1,045 for cleaning the district's 18 rooms for a year.

And where was the \$26,247 coming from? A levy of 16 mills, 10 for school and six for building purposes, on the borough's valuation of \$1,749,808. Three directors voted "no" on the budget without explanation, but the motion passed.

The treasury was bare, actually there was only \$179.44 in the building fund and the school fund had a \$561.47 deficit.

Some directors apparently felt the taxpayers had no right to know how much--or how little--money was in the treasurer's hands because Director Jonathan Wright tried at successive meetings to ram through a motion requiring fellow directors to vote "yea or nay" on whether reporters covering board meetings should print the treasury balance. Both times the board tabled Wright's motion.

The board, miffed at Wright, then printed an open letter in the "Miners' Journal" charging Wright was angry only because Tax Collector John Bindley had levied on his goods for non-payment of taxes.

The open letter also charged Wright had written anonymously to the "Democratic Standard," signing it "An Independent Taxpayer," berating the board for paying Collector Bindley 5 percent to collect taxes and boasting openly he would "annoy and fight" the school directors. The board censured Wright for bringing "odium" upon his fellow board members.

(The school board met in the Centre Street building and at least once the public knew in advance what the board was going to do, and how its faction-ridden members would vote. Retired newspaperman Ed A. Zwiebel, Jr., then a "cub" reporter, recalls he saw board members walking towards the building, one by one, the day before a scheduled meeting.

(Sensing a story, Zwiebel lifted up the cellar doors and hid in the basement where he could hear the details of the spirited caucus. When the board adjourned, Zwiebel found the janitor had locked the doors and he had to spend the night in the basement. He had his revenge. He wrote a story in the afternoon newspaper what the directors intended to do at that night's scheduled meeting. They did just that--and all through the meeting Zwiebel sat with a cherubic expression on his face while one faction blamed the other, and vice versa, for "leaking" the caucus news).

The teachers, however, had the right to know the textbooks which were to be used in the district, and to vote on them.

The directors, the superintendent, the principal and 17 female teachers met in "convention" to select the books.

There were no objections to last year's list but there was spirited balloting on some additions to the list. Sanders' "series of readers" won 14 of the teachers' 17 votes over Sargent's "series" (the directors didn't vote). Then, in a levelling gesture, teachers voted 15-2 for Sargent's spellers over Sanders' spellers.

There was a motion to refer arithmetic books to a committee but nobody voted on the motion. There were more motions, motions to amend, arguments on physical geography, chemistry and grammar books, and "an animated debate as to a question on order."

Finally two weeks later, in regular session with no teachers present, the board went ahead and freely substituted approved books.

There were, in fact, arguments about almost everything.

When one director moved that schools close for the summer vacation on June 29 to re-open September 3, another moved to amend the opening date to August 20, and another moved to amend the August 20 date to August 27 (August 20 won).

Somehow everybody seemed satisfied that four bills presented for payment at the meeting were in order (\$4 for brooms, \$17 for coal, \$41.58 for repairs and materials, and \$51 for interest on bonds).

And that the pupil who had been truant, disobedient and a runaway at recess should be suspended until after vacation, a puny penalty because the schools were ready to close anyway and vacation was just around the corner.

And that too much meeting time was spent in debate and argument.

So the 12 directors invoked cloture and limited each of their speeches to five minutes.

.....

Judy Brennan and 41 other tiny tots from first and second grade took it all in stride, almost with detached interest--voices coming from a rectangular box in the same Centre Street school building which Louisa Conrad had attended an even hundred years before.

It was television time for the youngsters of the classrooms of Miss Margaret Dragna and Mrs. Ruth Ney, and TV is something which Louisa Conrad couldn't have understood in 1866. Indeed it might have frightened her.

But to Judy Brennan and her playmates, the "TV break" was a routine and accepted part of modern day education.

On the television sets in the Pottsville Area School System-- in the proper class at the right time--a pupil may learn about heat and molecules, social insects and reptiles, introduction to algebra-word problems, and even the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, depending on the course of study.

The previous week it was "The Story of Ferdinand, the Friendly Bull" for the first and second graders, but today the program revolved around the North American Indian, his garments and his weapons.

The children, obeying the lady on the TV screen, threw imaginary Indian lances at the television set in the corner of the room and shot imaginary arrows at the story teller.

The learned "How the Rabbit Lost His Tail" (an Indian had fallen into a deep pit hurrying to his wedding and B'rer Rabbit had backed to the edge of the pit and offered to pull him out, but the strain on the rabbit's tail was too much and that's why rabbits have short tails).

They also found out "How the Robin Got His Red Breast" (an angry polar bear had stamped out all but one ember of the Northland's remaining fire, and to keep heat alive--and the friendly Indians as well--the robin fanned the little glowing ember into a blazing fire again but scorched its breast in the process).

"Story Corner" was all very interesting but after a half hour the kiddies were back to their desks and more serious, if less entertaining, subjects. But there were to be fascinating TV stories in future weeks (Coming Attractions: "Journey Cake, Ho!" and "Cinderella" and "The Tale of Peter Rabbit").

It would have been a mystifying experience to Louisa Conrad, but equally mystifying would have been the strange objects in the school hallway--a white box called an electric refrigerator for the children's half pints of milk for the day (133 chocolate and 30 white, partly subsidized by the federal government--bills to milk dealers in a month amount to more than \$2,000), an electric water cooler but no tin dipper, and a display of trophies won by the school's athletic teams, the Biddy Basketball, Gray-Y Basketball and Touch Football teams.

The boys in Louisa's class would have been lucky to have had enough room to play in the tiny "recess ground" in front of the cemetery plot a century before.

There were no covers on the desks in Judy Brennan's classroom, but then there were none in 1866, either, until Louisa Conrad.

....

The first school directors who had declared in 1836 that "the principal subject of instruction shall be a plain English education" would have been astonished, 130 years later, at the size and ramifications of their modest beginning.

Pottsville Area School System, in 1966, was at once not only a means of educating its member-area's children; it was a community and recreation center, an educational facility for adults, the source of nearly all mass musical instruction, the Mecca for its athletes and the delight of their followers.

It spent about $1\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars a year (general fund expenses for the year ending June 30, 1965, included \$1,017,968 for instruction, \$183,004 for plant operation and \$57,197 for plant maintenance, \$79,471 for fixed charges, \$55,171 for administration, \$35,039 for capital outlay, \$27,650 for community service, \$19,334 for health services, \$14,228 for transportation service, \$8,538 for attendance service, and \$1,572 for food service).

Its original five employees had mushroomed to more than 200, three fourths of them teachers and supervisors, and in a half month it paid them more than \$50,000 or 25 times the first year's entire budget.

A substitute teacher's salary for a day, \$23.68 or 1/190th of the present minimum \$4,500 salary, was higher than a month's pay for a female teacher in 1836.

There were employee categories undreamed in the district's earlier days--nurses, instrumental and vocal music directors, art and physical education supervisors, a director of elementary education, a school psychologist and even a home and school co-ordinator (nee a truant officer).

Nearly 600 pupils had enrolled at the outset of the current term for the Adult Education Program, to study almost anything from upholstery and plumbing to art, taught by 25 teachers, specialists in their fields.

An educator stood on a rostrum and spoke not to children but to graduates of the Standard Evening High School, a program which through the years enabled hundreds of persons, who were unable for any reason to complete high school courses, to finish prescribed courses of study and receive diplomas at full-fledged if belated graduation programs.

Through a somewhat different program, the Directed Correspondence Course, those unable to attend the evening high school classes could achieve the same academic result with greater flexibility.

There were 11 school buildings; the overall value of buildings and equipment was in excess of \$6 million. The replacement value of the high school, for which a \$900,000 bond issue had been floated in 1930, was more than \$3½ million.

Into these buildings streamed the people using the facilities for a wide diversification of purpose. At a single board meeting, permission was granted for the use of facilities for a circus, a strawberry festival, a Parent-Teachers' Association Fair, a marionette show, a dance ensemble, a meeting of University Women, a dance studio exhibition, and even adult golf instruction. (Use of school indoor and outdoor facilities by the public on a free or cost basis has been a longtime policy of Pottsville school boards.)

In the gymnasiums and out of doors, boy and girl athletes flexed muscles in spirited competition.

When the football team sprinted onto the grassy turf of Veterans Memorial Stadium, it was saluted by a 102-member band, 14 majorettes, six color guards and even 31 plaid-clad Scottish lassies playing bagpipes and beating drums.

There was music in the air at the 16th street school by three vocal groups, a 50-voice a cappella choir, a junior choir of 96 voices and a vocational boys choir of 35.

At the high school's Patterson Division, there was a 70-member band, an eighth grade choir of 90 voices and an 80-voice seventh grade choir. Here, through the midget football and Biddy basketball programs, was the nucleus of the high school 'varsity teams of the future, the boys who would carry on the athletic traditions established in the 90's.

There were books to be read, 14,334 volumes at 16th street and 3,986 at 12th street, the outgrowth of a library which had started as the Mrs. Joseph C. Bright Library in 1892 at the Garfield Building.

School pupils from areas beyond reasonable walking distance rode to schools in buses; disabled pupils, in school-provided taxicabs.

Children of pre-school age went to school, 300 of them in kindergarten classes established in six buildings. There was even a "head start" program to begin the coming summer, an eight-week period for children planning either to enter kindergarten in the fall or to enter first grade without previous kindergarten experience.

The educational concept went far beyond the tiny world of readin', writin' and 'rithmetic.

In the age of the automobile and in the interest of safe highway driving, the school offered 36 classroom periods of driver training to 274 members of the junior class and a minimum of six hours to each of 115 seniors behind the wheel of a dual-control automobile.

It looked more like a retail store than a classroom but it was distributive education to 40 high school students who were enrolled in Distributive Education Classes learning fine points of retailing, wholesaling, advertising, salesmanship, transportation, fashion and display. It was a phase of the business world enabling students not only to learn marketing and management but to work in stores and earn "out-of-class" money.

In the high school, girls were taught to cook and sew with the aid of modern ranges and sewing machines and to become more competent mothers of tomorrow, and some 296 students sketched and painted in an expanding popular art program.

Size of the graduation classes of the high school were on the upswing. In 1941, the school had graduated 319 students, its largest class. With a gradual decline in overall school enrollment, the number had dropped as low as 185 in 1953, then climbed slowly to 304 in 1965, highest in the second half of the century.

Since 1929, when vocational education was established at the Patterson Building on a modest scale, students have bent over lathes, saws and other machines on programs of general shop, carpentry, pattern making, drafting, electricity, machine shop, auto mechanics, metal work and similar fields.

During World War II, the district had acquired the former National Youth Administration shops on Peacock Street, operated welding, machine shop, sheet metal, body and fender, and electronics programs and even conducted an "off-campus" vocational shop at Shenandoah.

Vocational facilities were used for training prospective employees of new plants introduced into the Pottsville area as the culmination of an intensive community effort to diversify industry.

High school students ate at cost--or below cost--in a modern cafeteria. The ill or injured of the district were taught at home by faculty members under the "home-bound" program. The well-endowed Hilton Memorial Scholarship Fund, the Braun Music and Journalism scholarships and several lesser funds provided aid to worthy graduates eager for college education. There was even a scholarship fund for teachers engaged in social studies.

And a special teacher who ministered to pupils under-equipped to cope with normal, regulated study.

Languages taught in the high school ranged from English to Latin, French, Spanish and German. The mathematics program embraced algebra, trigonometry, senior mathematics, plane and solid geometry and analytic geometry; the science program ranged from general science to physics, biology and chemistry.

Business subjects taught included not only the bookkeeping, shorthand and typing of yesteryear; they extended to advanced business and commercial mathematics, sales, consumer education, business behavior and law, and junior business training.

The field of social studies embraced both the national and international--U. S. World History, World Culture and World Problems.

The state's enlarging influence in school fiscal affairs was reflected repeatedly in many of these fields. The need for upgrading equipment such as electric typewriters, adding machines and dictating-transcribing machines in the high school's business education department indicated a cost of some \$11,000; the State Department of Public Instruction was ready to foot half the bill. Even 50% of the cost of safety goggles for chemistry and vocational students was re-imbursable.

And in prospect was a \$122,410 planetarium, first project of its kind in the United States under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title One, for the high school including demonstration laboratory equipment, a planetarium with dome and observatory with telescope.

What, indeed, had time wrought since 1836!

THE REORGANIZATION LAWS

The School District Reorganization Act of 1963, Act Number 299, the Act of August 8, 1963, provides as follows:

"Section 296. Establishment of Reorganized School Districts. On July 1, 1966, or on the date of advance establishment, all administrative units contained in plans of organization of administrative units approved by the Council of Basic Education shall constitute and be deemed established as school districts, and shall belong to the class to which they are entitled as provided by law."

With a stroke of the pen, Governor William W. Scranton eliminated Pennsylvania's controversial 1961 school district reorganization law and sounded the death knell of some 1,500 school districts including the Pottsville School District.

Actually, until July 1, 1966, the Pottsville School District remains a separate political entity.

But the major part of its functions were absorbed by the Pottsville Area School System in 1962.

Its seven directors are still Pottsville School Directors but they are also members of the joint school committee, with those of Port Carbon, Mechanicsville and Mt. Carbon.

Most of its budget, in the neighborhood of $1\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars, is expended through contributions to PASS.

Since 1962, it has had no pupils--they were a part of the Pottsville Area School System, Administrative Unit 7, which came into existence with implementation of Act 561, the earlier reorganization law.

It held title to its school buildings but its teaching corps, supervisors, custodians and clerks were PASS employees.

And by July 1, 1966, it would vanish forever into Pottsville Area School District, Administrative Unit 63-7, created by Act 299.

PASD would encompass the physical areas of Pottsville, Port Carbon, Mechanicsville, Mt. Carbon, Palo Alto and Norwegian Township, and its future directors would be elected by voters of these areas.

Consolidation, or whatever the proper terminology, is nothing new to the Pottsville School District.

In 1907, when Yorkville and Pottsville boroughs joined hands, the two school districts were also united.

The consolidation with Yorkville took place April 24, 1907, three months after the two boroughs voted 954-663 to unite (Pottsville vote 839 for, 593 against; Yorkville, 115 for, 70 against).

With the two boroughs uniting, the school districts formed a single board of directors but all members of the two districts retained their seats until expiration of their terms.

This brought the overall number of board members to 27, an all-time high. The 27 members included three Smiths (B. J., George and R. D.) and two Reids (John and Robert A.), a situation which caused more than a mite of confusion at meetings for some time to come but there is every indication the enlarged board operated amicably without conflict.

Yorkville also brought into the consolidation three school rooms, three teachers, 100 pupils and a cash balance of \$809.60. It also brought a debt of \$4,975 in outstanding bonds and temporary loans.

Act 561 was more complicated and controversial.

First meeting to implement the Act as the Pottsville Area School System was held August 20, 1962, with the full Pottsville and Port Carbon boards attending.

The conferees approved a joint school agreement covering administrative unit 7, agreeing to assume proportionate costs of schools of the joint system. The affairs were to be administered by a joint school committee comprising all seven Pottsville directors and one Port Carbon director. The directors were to be known as committee members albeit they were full-fledged directors in their own communities.

The joint school committee acquired all teachers from both districts and agreed to make contributions for the district's operation. Each of the two member districts were responsible for the retirement of their own debts outstanding on the effective date of the agreement.

It was agreed current expenses would be divided on a pro-rata basis in proportion to the average daily membership of resident pupils attending schools of the joint school system. Pupils were required to attend school buildings to which assigned but elementary centers, kindergarten through grade six, were to be maintained in both communities.

Title to properties or buildings held by the respective districts were to remain in their then ownership but were to be administered by the eight directors.

Approval of the Department of Public Instruction was sought by petition of the two districts effective July 1, 1962, and granted.

Pottsville Board President Lloyd L. Martz was elected first president, Harry J. Rehman, vice president, and Howard S. Fernsler, secretary, of PASS.

The joint school committee adopted a \$1,227,419 budget for the fiscal year and elected Pottsville School District Superintendent D. H. H. Lengel as PASS superintendent.

Mechanicsville, with a pupil population in grades one through seven, and Mt. Carbon, with a single building accommodating pupils in grades one through eight, entered PASS effective July 1, 1963, but Palo Alto declined entry for financial reasons.

Pottsville Area School System also passes out of existence, concurrent with the Pottsville School District, on July 1.

Its final budget for the year ending June 30, 1966, was \$1,601,248 of which \$1,530,843 represented estimated contributions from the four participating school districts, all but about \$200,000 being represented by Pottsville's share as the major contributor.

The new school unit brought a new name to Pottsville High School and its athletic teams, but the name "Pottsville High" continued to cling to the school and its teams, although the term Pottsville Area High School is technically proper.

Growing importance of the minor members of PASS is reflected in the roll of 1965 high school graduates. Of the 269 resident graduates, 214 were from Pottsville and one was from the Children's home, 38 were from Port Carbon, 13 from Mechanicsville and three from Mt. Carbon. Thirty-five non-resident graduates brought the overall number to 304.

But of major importance to the joint administration of schools of the four communities is the fact that the committee members acted in harmony, almost always in unanimity and without faction which have, indeed, been characteristic of Pottsville boards for more than three decades.

Act 299, the most recent legislative weapon to eliminate the now almost extinct "little red school house" and to consolidate school facilities to provide wider fields of educational opportunity, was not completely satisfying to Governor Scranton when he signed the bill.

While conceding some measure of disappointment, Governor Scranton nevertheless said at the bill-signing ceremony: "This bill retains many of the worthwhile features of the law it repeals (the 1961 law) while removing the rigidity of standards which so many people found objectionable."

The new law proposes to reduce by the July 1 deadline the number of school districts in the state from 2,100 to 540. Schuylkill County originally had 68 school districts, a number which must be reduced to 12 by the deadline.

First step in the organization of administrative unit 63-7, the unit set up by the County School Board and approved by the State Board of Education, was taken January 4, 1966.

All Pottsville directors--Lloyd L. Martz, Harry J. Rehman, Howard S. Fernsler, John S. Clarke, Donald D. Dolbin, Charles J. Boyer and Chester B. Lawson--and two from the five other population areas--Harold J. Adams, Port Carbon, and Joseph Hopkins, Norwegian Township--were named members of the Interim Operating Committee and become directors of Pottsville Area School District next July 1.

Martz, already President of the Pottsville School District and Pottsville Area School System, was elected first President of the Pottsville Area School District. His term and that of Vice President Rehman expire the first Monday of December, 1966. Terms of Secretary Fernsler, Treasurer Clarke, Solicitor Malcolm D. Reeves and Assistant Secretary Minna Hutchinson expire June 30.

PASS Superintendent Alex G. Atty, not quite ending his first year in this post, was elected PASD Superintendent for a four-year term on April 12.

Preliminary work in setting up details of operation of the enlarged district and the knotty problems of organization are being accomplished by these key officers and employees without remuneration..

Terms of Directors Clarke, Boyer, Rehman, Dolbin, Lawson and Adams expire the first Monday of December, 1967; those of Hopkins, Martz and Fernsler, the first Monday of December, 1969.

Norwegian Township brings to PASD a school at Seltzer, grades one through eight, and Palo Alto brings a grade one-through-eight school in that borough.

Election of the nine-person board was accomplished in accordance with the principle of proportionate representation according to population. Later will come planning for the 1967 election when six directors will be elected under the proportionate population plan which, if deviated from, requires court approval.

A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

The day of the "little red school house" is past and so, it appears, is the day when Pottsville Area School District pupils above the fourth grade level will be housed in schools scattered over the physical area of the district.

Almost certainly some of the older buildings in the enlarged district will be discarded with the passage of time. It would be premature to conclude which buildings are due for elimination but inevitably new thinking and demands in education require newer facilities.

Abandonment of certain buildings and redistricting were recommended more than four decades ago, in the 1923 school survey.

Within a few years of this survey, two aging buildings, Bunker Hill and York Farm, were abandoned. Garfield, recommended for abandonment, is still a key building of the district.

Certain recommendations which may have appeared sound in 1923 are referred to here only to reflect how radically the school picture has changed since that time; abandonment of the Centre Street and Minersville Street buildings and lodging of their pupils in the Race Street Building which would have been increased to a school accommodating 1,000 pupils, and enlargement of the Jalappa Building to a capacity of 800 to absorb the enrollment of the Fishbach Building upon its abandonment.

Superintendent L. A. BuDahn's survey of 1938 looked forward to realization of something like the Centre Street-Minersville Street-Race Street consolidation, the combining of the Orchard and Jackson Street school populations into a single school, and erection of a new building to accommodate the joint Fishbach and Jalappa pupils.

The "new" Bunker Hill Building, for two decades used by the Pennsylvania State University as its Pottsville campus, may revert to public school use when the campus moves to Schuylkill Haven within a few months.

Fishbach has long since been abandoned permanently, and the Orchard Building was sold last year.

The projection for the schools of tomorrow contemplates these buildings:

Target date 1968: A new building rising on the 32-acre plot east of the present high school building, 16th Street to 12th. This building, to be known as an "intermediate" school, would accommodate all district pupils of grades five through eight in 35 rooms with a 1,200 pupil capacity. It would be complete with gymnasium, swimming pool and cafeteria. Parking areas, a playground and an athletic field would be nearby. The district's administration building, moved from Garfield which now has insufficient space for this purpose, would be on this plot.

Target date 1972: A new building on part of the present site of the Minersville Street Urban Redevelopment Area which would accommodate an estimated 600 pupils from kindergarten through fourth grade, absorbing the present enrollments of the Minersville Street, Race Street, Centre Street and possibly the Mt. Hope buildings.

Other district buildings would be retained as "neighborhood" schools accommodating kindergarten through fourth grades with the probability of attention to a newer East Side facility.

Vanished entirely, apparently, is any prospect that the need for new school facilities could be blocked by a negative vote by the electorate which in 1924 and 1927 delayed construction of the long-needed high school.

Formation of a Building Authority to incur the required indebtedness, issue bonds and proceed with construction is a simpler, highly-favored procedure of many of today's governmental bodies.

Hand-in-hand with new school construction is the planned "face lifting" of the 16th street high school which, while still a handsome building, begins to reflect the need for brightening and refurbishing.

Not to be ruled out, either, is the possibility that a future school facility may be built outside the limits of the City of Pottsville.

While the major part of the district is, population-wise, represented by the county seat, the other components of PASD--Port Carbon, Mechanicsville, Palo Alto, Norwegian Township and Mt. Carbon--have their effective voice in the district's affairs.

And with expansion space in Pottsville dwindling, it may well be that a future building of the Pottsville Area School District may be put up outside the city which bears the name of iron master John Pott, donor of its first school.

POTTSVILLE IN 1966

In 1966, when Pottsville yielded its identity as a separate school district because of commonwealth legislation, John Pott's community had a population of some 21,000 persons, an expanding system of concrete highways to bring Schuylkill County by motor car to the area's retail and financial hub, and a public school structure undreamed 132 years before.

The once flourishing "port" on the Schuylkill Canal was just a memory; shipments of coal had ceased from Pottsville even before the last recorded passage of a canal boat through the Schuylkill Haven locks in 1888.

There were some nostalgic vestiges of later forms of transportation.

The trolley--first a "horse car" in 1872 and then an electric-powered wonder--had been a vital part of the city and county transportation picture until it vanished in 1932.

Even the durable "iron horse" showed unmistakable signs of decline. True, passenger service to Philadelphia continued daily in the form of five Rail Diesel "trains," sometimes single coaches, and freight service still existed albeit coal and merchandise shipments were increasingly captured by the motor truck.

No living person remembered, and few indeed had ever heard of, rails which once ran through central city from tiny mountainside collieries.

There were substantial and ever-growing school systems, a now departing Pottsville School District and a parochial school network.

The lone remaining private school was the Ford School of Business which only the year before had acquired the aging but still attractive Orchard School Building.

The long-lived weekly, then later daily, "Miners' Journal" and its successor "Pottsville Journal" had finally yielded to competition in 1953 and the "Pottsville Republican" remained as the city's only newspaper.

The public press no longer printed local market or commodity prices. But prices were normal, for the times, eggs now 50 cents a dozen, butter 73 cents a pound and the "medium-priced" spread 30 cents a pound, potatoes \$3.60 a bushel. Lard, a disappearing commodity, was quoted at 20 cents a pound. Nobody dreamed of buying feathers, at any price. And whiskey was about \$25 a gallon or some 100 times the price it commanded in 1834 when the public school system moved quietly into the community.

There were four banks, somewhat less than the maximum number before the depression of the early 1930's. The water company now operated as the Schuylkill County Municipal Authority from a long-established office at 221 South Centre Street. Mr. Yuengling's brewery was in its 137th year. And George Dengler's White Horse Tavern had given way successively to the Merchants' Hotel, the Hotel Allan, and the present Necho Allen Hotel, created by community enterprise in 1927.

The "Pottsville Republican" directory of churches listed 23 places of organized worship and ladies could now walk to church, secure that the paved streets forever precluded mud to a reasonable degree.

Pottsville was a city of stores and business establishments although central city faced an ever-growing threat of mercantile loss by the invasion of out-of-city super markets and shopping centers.

Coal, alas, was no longer King, and a decreasing number of home owners used the glittering "hard rocks" which had warmed "discoverer" Necho Allen when he roused from a night's sleep in the hills of nearby New Castle Township in 1790.

No coal was dug in Pottsville proper, and nobody knew or cared about the rails, slumbering beneath the city streets, which Samuel Lewis had laid more than a century and a quarter before to carry anthracite from newly-dug tunnels.

With the decline of anthracite as a basic industry, a public-spirited community had raised countless of thousands of dollars by subscription to diversify industry-steel, shirts, pajamas, textiles, plastics and assorted products.

Pottsville, in 1966, was a community of dogged enterprise, urban re-development in the form of modern housing and recreational opportunity, and an undreamed-of opportunity in public education, even to the projected \$120,000.00 planetarium to gaze into the skies.

Everything was changed--but was it?

In 1851, when the "new" Bunker Hill school was opened, there was an "observatory" built atop that building to gaze into the skies.

THE LAST SCHOOL BOARD

<u>Member</u>	<u>Years of Service</u>
Lloyd L. Martz, president	1935-1966
Harry J. Rehman, vice president	1953-1966
Howard S. Fernsler, secretary	1933-1966
John S. Clarke, treasurer	1953-1966
Donald D. Dolbin	1955-1966
Charles J. Boyer	1958-1966
Chester B. Lawson	1964-1966

Living Former Members of
the POTTSVILLE SCHOOL BOARD

Walter S. Farquhar	1931-1937
Elwyn Jones	1937-1941
Herrwood E. Hobbs	1937-1954
L. D. Lamont	1943-1955
William Jeffries	1954-1955
Dorothy K. Critz	1955-1961

